The German Tribune

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EEC throws weight behind Sadat move

Western Europe's concern over the Middle East crisis, emphasised in EEC statements over the past four years, is again illustrated by the talks on a Community statement supporting President Sadat's peace initiative

The statement may be approved by the European Council Conference (of heads of state) in Copenhagen in April.

What happens in the Middle East clearly affects Europe. The Middle East is virtually on our doorstep and any war there would have grave consequences for us.

Several thousand ships a day cross the Mediterranean bringing European exports to other parts of the world. Many of our vital raw materials and most of our petrol also come via the Mediterranean. A new war in the Middle East would cut off both these supply routes.

The economic effects of a Middle East crisis on Europe, the world's second largest industrial zone after the USA, could be disastrous.

This applies not only to the European Economic Community, but also to its EFTA (European Free Trade Association) partners such as Austria, Switzerland and Sweden. A flourishing EEC is vital for EFTA exports.

There is also a political dimension. The next war in the Middle East would provide the Soviet Union with a ready-made pretext for re-establishing itself in the Arab world.

The intensive contacts between Syria and the Soviet Union underline this fact. Russia's standing and influence in the Arab world at the moment is far from high.

The Russians have considerably reduced the number of their warships cruising in the Mediterranean, where they are handicapped by a lack of land bases. If they extended their influence in the Arab world, it would not be long before the Red Fleet had strategic bases on the southern shores of the Mediterranean.

This in turn would soon enable them to encircle free Europe in the event of a military conflict.

The Soviet Union's interest in the Arab world is economic as well as military. From the middle of 1985, the Soviet Union will have to start looking for some of its oil, as it will be unable to meet its requirements from Russian oilfields.

It will then be dependent on Middle Eastern oil, yet another good reason for the Soviet Union to get her foot well inside the door now.

The prospect of the EEC having the Russians as competitors for Middle East oil is daunting, especially as the Soviet Union would always have the opportunity of backing the Arabs in Arab-Israeli crises and conflicts.

It is quite natural that big powers should only form alliances with partners whom they know they can influence. Given their need for strategic bases and guaranteed oil supplies in the 1980s, the Russian effort to win friends and influence people in the Middle East is understandable.

On the other hand, Europe needs peace and stability in the Middle East. This is why, since November 1973, the EEC has been pursuing an even-handed policy towards Israel and the Arabs.

Four years ago, the EEC said that the "legitimate rights" of the Palestinians should be recognised. Since June 1977, the EEC has been in favour of a Palestinian homeland, while at the same time insisting on Israel's absolute right to guaranteed frontiers.

We can assume that despite Israeli objections this policy will continue. Chancellor Schmidt hinted as much in his talks with President Sadat in Egypt in December.

The EEC has much to offer its Middle East partners once peace has been secured. Stability in the Middle East is vital to West European interests. The Arabs have been making it quite plain since 1973 that they want the EEC as their discussion partner, not the separate states in the Community.

The EEC members have got broad enough shoulders to offer something to both Arabs and the Israelis politically and economically. This would mean the Moslems, whose sympathies with Marxism and communism are limited enough now, would be even less susceptible to Moscow's expansionist policies.

This would be to the advantage not only of the Arabs and the Israelis, but also of the Europeans.

This is the long-term thinking behind the EEC's treaties with Israel and the Arab Mediterranean states (though no agreement has yet been concluded with Libya).

It is also the prime motive behind the European-Arab dialogue between the EEC and the 20 members of the Arab League.

Hermann Bohle

(Kieler Nachrichten, 25 February 1978)

IN THIS ISSUE



Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher meets his Tanzanian counterpart Benjamin Mkapa at Dar-es-Salaam airport (Photo: dpa)

Genscher ties African bonds

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher is visiting Burundi, Ruanda and Tanzania, three countries formerly part of German East Africa.

The Germans are welcome and familiar guests in Burundi and Ruanda, not only because of historical ties but also because of the considerable amount of development aid they have given these countries.

Burundi and Ruanda, though small, have a say in the deliberations of the African states and can be relied on to speak in the Federal Republic's favour should this be necessary.

Tanzania, though, is the first and most important stage in the Foreign Minister's visit. It has on several occasions severely criticised this country for its South African policies. No doubt the Tanzanians have been influenced here by communist propaganda.

This country's image in the Tanzanian media has improved recently, but Herr Genscher's meeting with Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere remains of vital importance.

President Nyerere is a strong proponent of African socialism and his voice carries great weight on the African continent. His recent efforts to get the Namibian freedom movement Swapo (South West African Peoples' Organisation) to moderate its policies came at an opportune moment for the Bonn government.

Herr Genscher has recently been trying hard, along with the four other Western members of the UN Security Council, to ensure a peaceful transition from South African to black majority rule. The basic principle of German foreign policy is to help ensure peaceful solutions to African problems. This coincides with the African wish to decide their policies for themselves.

Herr Genscher has for some time been arguing that the old form of colonialism should not be followed by a new, ideological form.

Rudi Mews

(Nordwest Zeitung, 27 February 1978)



Bonn meeting

President Walter Scheel greets Bohuslav Chnoupek, the Czechoslovakian Foreign Minister, in Bonn. Among matters discussed were plans for the visit later this year of Gustav Husak, the Czech head of state (Photo: dpa)

COMMON MARKET

Call for EEC to meet US with joint energy policy

Handelsblatt
DEUTSCHE WIRTSCHAFTSZEITUNG

The Common Market must find a joint approach to energy policy and come to terms with the United States on reducing dependence on oil imports, says EEC commissioner Guido Brunner.

When President Carter visits Bonn on 15 July he must be confronted with a European energy-saving programme, Dr Brunner told financial correspondents in Düsseldorf.

He is the Brussels Common Market commissioner responsible for energy policy.

The United States, he said, must realise that the decline in dollar parity because of a record US trade deficit due to oil imports is to the detriment of the international economy.

If the dollar drops below two deutschmarks on exchange markets the cumulative result is sure to be continued recession and even more unemployment.

What is more, such progress as has been made in fighting inflation would have been in vain.

In the short term, Dr Brunner admits, the prospects of a joint European approach to energy are none too bright. Energy resources are unevenly distributed around Europe and there is a current surplus of supply.

Price increases cannot at present be made, so *consumers are showing little* inclination to switch from petroleum to other energy resources.

In the medium term the prospects are different, Guido Brunner says.

From 1982/83 North Sea oil and gas output, which at best will meet ten to 15 per cent of European energy requirements, will start to decline.

If the United States fails to make energy cuts American oil imports are likely to reach 600 million tons a year by 1985. The Soviet Union is also increasingly buying petroleum on world markets.

Thus there is a serious risk of a situation in which oil will no longer be shared via market prices. Political power and access alone will count, and Europe looks like losing on this score.

Europe ought to set itself a number of targets, Dr Brunner says. To ensure energy supplies EEC coal output must be increased to 250 million tons a year by 1985.

Thirteen per cent of energy requirements must be met by nuclear power and annual oil imports pruned to 500 million tons, a saving of 15 per cent of estimated annual demand increase.

Yet by 1985 atomic energy will account for at best eight or nine per cent of power requirements, so pruning oil imports is obviously going to prove a tall order.

What is more, Guido Brunner would like to see the Nine take greater precautions against any future crisis. He would also like to see greater diversification by investment in solar and geothermic energy.

Dr Brunner advocates investing the bulk of the projected $2,500 million EEC loan in energy facilities such as transport. Energy allocations earmarked in the EEC budget also deserve a boost.

The commissioner would like to make greater use of the Common Market's ability to stipulate legislative demands in the energy sector.

The Council of Ministers is empowered to issue guidelines legally binding on member-countries. It is high time energy-saving guidelines were agreed on by the Ministers, Dr Brunner says.

The European Community ought also to safeguard uranium supplies. The Brussels commission has already succeeded in persuading Canada to lift its ban on uranium exports to Europe.

Brunner is to meet 60 oilmen in March and will try to persuade them to accept self-restraint in their output of mineral oil products.

What he has in mind is a ceiling of two per cent increased production in the first year of any agreement.

He is convinced of the urgent need to eliminate surplus refinery capacity in the Common Market, whose reduction from 140 million to 80 million tons is not enough.

His talks with Britain's Energy Secretary Tony Benn promise to be particularly difficult. But Brunner confidently says: "I am going to London, not to Canossa" (where a Holy Roman Emperor had to beg forgiveness from a mediaeval Pope).

To induce the British government to accept a European policy line, Dr Brunner is prepared to concede Scotland two new refineries with a combined capacity of between 18 and 20 million tons of crude oil per annum.



Guido Brunner
(Photo: Sven Simon)

He is also planning to introduce surveillance and statistical records of mineral oil imports from non-EEC countries, especially Eastern Europe.

The EEC Commission must also ensure that there are no national or regional subsidies going towards the construction of new refineries.

To boost coal sales, trade within the Nine is to be promoted. Brunner suggests an EEC subsidy of DM 500 million on coal supplied to power stations. He sees a grant of $10 per ton.

The commissioner hopes that Brussels will submit proposals to the coming summit of EEC heads in Hamburg on 6 and 7 July. Europe would then be able to present President Carter with uniform proposals.

Dr Brunner also claims that the United States could cut oil imports by ten per cent if President Carter were to impose a $5 levy on every ton of oil imported. He does not need Congressional approval for this, so he could, if he wished, override Congress.

(Handelsblatt, 22 February 1978)

New light on Community poor

The European Community is generally considered the land of milk and honey — and yet one in 26 Community citizens belongs to a "sub-proletariat" stratum, the poorest of the poor.

This has been established by a Brussels study in connection with an anti-poverty campaign.

The channeling of *money from more* affluent to poorer regions has become an accepted EEC pratice.

The mayor of Hamburg once said in Brussels that the Community's affluence could only be preserved and increased if the haves lent a helping hand to the have-nots.

The average Hamburger is six times better off than the inhabitant of *southern Italy. And the Italian is better off* than are people in certain parts of Ireland and Scotland.

The EEC Council of Ministers defined proverty in the Community as follows: "People living in poverty are individuals or families whose financial means are so restricted that they are excluded from the tolerable minimum in their own countries."

Of the 260 million EEC citizens, ten million live at poverty level.

Close to 50 per cent of Belgium's sub-proletariat has to subsist on less than the equivalent of DM 5 a day.

One of the conspicuous aspects is that the very poorest in the EEC member states are not foreigners but locals. They live in abandoned barracks, mostly in the cities. The present economic crisis has made their position worse.

Without progressive levelling off of the affluence among the Nine it will be impossible to keep the Community going in the long run. On the other hand, the members depend economically on the Common Market. It is therefore necessary to boost economic growth in the most underdeveloped regions.

Few people know that in some parts of Scotland unemployment is at 20 per cent of the working population.

If the people in the rest of the EEC have no earnings because they are out of work, they are obviously in no position to buy German or Danish goods.

Some three million jobs in the Federal Republic of Germany today depend on the sale of German goods to the other eight partner nations. The turnover of this country's trade with the rest of the Community amounts to 100 million deutschmarks per annum.

But only 5 per cent of the EEC budget has been set aside for the purpose of *balancing the standard of living* — compared with 70 per cent for the Community's agricultural policy.

Hermann Bohle

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 9 February 1978)

Consultation plan to help Third World industry



Last summer go-it-alone France forced the Common Market to impose quotas on textiles imports, much to the chagrin of several developing countries.

"First the Europeans supply us with cash and know-how to develop a textile industry of our own," said sad Tunisia, "then they impose restrictions on access to their markets." The European Community hopes in future to avoid such unpleasant surprises for the developing countries.

The EEC Commission in Brussels does not see a solemn renunciation of quotas and similar protective measures. What the Eurocrats have in mind is a system of consultations to show the developing countries what products stand long-term prospects of good sales in the EEC.

Once Third World decisions on industrial development are taken with a view to production capacity in the EEC and market circumstances, protective measures will no longer been needed, says EEC commissioner Claude Cheysson of France.

Safeguards of this kind are to be provided for the 53 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries linked with the Common Market by the Lomé Convention.

This agreement, concluded in the West African capital in February 1975, provides for development aid to the ACP countries of some DM 10,000 million by 1980 (not to mention virtually unlimited access to EEC markets).

The Brussels commission recently gave the Council of Ministers a memorandum of proposals for negotiations on *a renewal of the Lomé pact.*

The new agreement, to be negotiated this year, is envisaged as incorporating "obligatory and periodic consultations" between the EEC and the ACP countries, including industrial interests and parties to collective bargaining.

Whenever any party chooses or whenever investment in sensitive sectors, *such as textiles or footwear, is involved,* consultations will be held to review de-

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POLITICS

Genscher speech renews speculation over cracks in coalition unity

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, chairman of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) recently criticised his government coalition partners, the Social Democrats (SPD), for lack of unity and strongly underlined his own party's independence.

Shortly afterwards the FDP executive made a point of saying that their political cooperation with the SPD was good. The intention was to mitigate Herr Genscher's criticism, which had given the impression that the days of the government coalition were numbered.

One cannot escape, however, the impression that the social-liberal coalition is near the brink, if not on it. Herr Genscher is master of the strategy of limited conflict with his coalition partner and he certainly weighed his words and their likely effect carefully.

Many observers believe Herr Genscher capable of paving the way for a coalition with the CDU/CSU when the moment is opportune — without taking the risk of self-destruction.

Herr Genscher has always been a reliable coalition partner in Herr Schmidt's government, abiding strictly by coalition agreements. No one has ever seriously accused him of being an opportunist. But what if the SPD begins to fall apart?

The FDP certainly intended to remain in coalition with the SPD after the general election in October 1976. There was never any question of changing partners half-way. Since then fear and un*certainty have crept into the FDP ranks.*

They are alarmed at the possible outcome of the Land elections this year. The vital question is: what do the voters think of the FDP's role in the Bonn coalition? The party's success in the Hamburg, Lower Saxony, Hesse and Bavaria elections will depend on the answer.

The FDP does not want to be blamed for the *mere one-vote majority* (245 ayes, 244 noes) for the coalition's anti-terror law in the Bundestag. The FDP is in coalition with the CDU in two Land governments (Lower saxony and the Saarland). It could, theoretically, put pressure on its CDU partners to vote for the law in the Bundesrat.

Herr Genscher has stressed that his party cannot be expected to do this. It is up to the SPD, *he argues, to ensure the* safe passage of the law by tightening up its own party discipline.

Genscher made a pre-emptive strike in a recent interview on Hessian Radio. "I cannot anticipate what decisions the Saarland and Lower Saxony governments will make … the question will be discussed, but we cannot impose our will in the matter," he said.

"Our coalition policy in these *Länder* is identical to our policy in Bonn … I think it would be quite wrong to expect the FDP and CDU in Hanover and Saarbrücken to solve problems created by a handfull of social democrat MPs."

Clearly, Herr Genscher would not have been so cool towards the SPD if there had not been considerable annoyance in his party at the behaviour of the Social Democrats. The Poullain scandal, which led to the resignation of North Rhine Westphalia finance minister Halstenberg, followed by the Leber crisis and the Cabinet reshuffle shook and angered the liberals.

The FDP voted to a man for the anti-terror laws, but was chagrined to see that a small group of Social Democrats forced through last-minute changes which many liberals would have liked to see.

Here it is hardly surprising that Herr Genscher's remarks have been interpreted as the first sign of an FDP pull-out, or at least as a forceful demonstration of FDP independence.

Some observers predicted serious conflicts over basic policy between the SPD and the FDP after the last general elections. But events have proved them wrong. The predictions were based on quite reasonables premises. Who, for instance, would have thought that continuing high unemployment would not seriously affect stability?

Helmut Schmidt has skilfully averted the expected conflict with his liberal partners on government measures to combat unemployment and established an excellent working relationship with Otto Graf Lambsdorff, the FDP Minister of Economic Affairs.

The government's measures to cut costs in the health service passed through without liberal demur. Even the second restructuring of the pensions funds and the abandonment of the long-held system by which pensions are automatically increased to keep pace with incomes caused more problems within the SPD itself than between the SPD and the FDP.

In foreign and security policy there are differences between the coalition partners but no real conflict. The Chancellor has not yet come up with an initiative for the Vienna talks on troop reductions, so there is no liklihood of a clash between him and Herr Genscher here for the time being.

Not even the neutron bomb is likely to cause friction between the two parties. The FDP party has given the government a free hand. The SPD looks inclined to accept Egon Bahr's pragmatic recommendation that the government should keep all its options open for gaining a majority on the issue.

In other words, the differences between FDP and SPD, despite the vote on the anti-terror law, are not yet great enough to raise Opposition leader Helmut Kohl's hopes of wooing Herr Genscher into a coalition with his party.

The dangers to the present coalition come from two sides. Firstly, if the Bundesrat rejects the anti-terror laws, it will go back to the Bundestag. If the government then fails to muster 249 votes the general view is that its chances of surviving until next election are slight, though it could perhaps linger on for a few months.

Secondly, if, for whatever reason, the FDP performed badly in the elections in Hamburg, Lower Saxony or Hesse this would have a serious effect on the mood of the parliamentary party. If in addition Alfred Dregger (CDU) should win in Hesse, the Free Democrats could succumb to the temptations the CDU are holding out. A CDU wictory in Hesse would give the Opposition a two-thirds majority in the Bundesrat, and this in turn would make the collapse of the present government almost inevitable. The liberals have always been vulnerable in elections.

The FDP are anxious to avoid any of the SPD's tarnished image rubbing off on them. Yet at the same time it is eager to bask in the Chancellor's glory. In Bonn the FDP is united and loyal to the coalition, but reserves the right to *hold its options* open in Bonn and elsewhere.

This is a complex policy for the electorate to follow and it is difficult to predict its effect on the Land election outcome. Genscher certainly has no specific and dramatic plans up his sleeve. He has demonstrated his independence and that, for the moment, is enough. Not even he can tell what moves events may force him to make — all he can do is play a waiting game.

Kurt Becker

(Die Zeit, 24 February 1978)

Anti-terror vote puts searchlight on SPD rebels

The events surrounding the voting on the SPD/FDP coalition government's anti-terror laws were turbulent and dramatic. What precisely was at stake?

Clearly it was not just a matter of the law itself. The consensus was that the fate of the coalition government itself hung in the balance.

Some observers went further and compared the meeting of the SPD parliamentary party before the vote to the last meeting of the SPD during the Weimar Republic. The impression given was that the Federal Republic of Germany was tottering on the brink of the abyss.

This is clearly an exaggeration. The worst that could happen was the rejection of the government anti-terror laws. Chances are that this would not have had as decisive an effect as many now believe on the fight against terrorism.

Certainly the government would not have had to resign. The rules in Bonn are not the same as those in London.

The root problem is the difficulties of the Social Democratic Party, a problem so grave that it could eventually become a problem for the state. This is the third time that a group of SPD MPs have defied the party whip on a vital issue and brought their government to within an inch of defeat.

The previous two occasions were the vote on tax reform on 16 June 1977 and the vote on the contact ban law of 26 September 1977. The dissidents then were not always the same, but there is obviously a small opposition group within the SPD which poses a severe problem for the party.

It has become common to describe this group as left wing. The description is misleading. The only case where left-wing policies were involved was the vote against the tax-reform where the rebels disagreed with tax concessions to bosses.

But what is typically left wing about the opposition to the contact ban law and the anti-terror law? In what way could this resistance be described as Marxist?

The origins of this opposition are radical and liberal rather than left wing. They stem from the belief that our state must allow even more freedom than it *does. This has precious little to do with* being left wing.

The professional background of the SPD rebels is indicative. Manfred Coppik is a lawyer, Karl Heinz Hansen a former grammar school teacher, Dieter Lattmann a writer, Peter Conradi an architect, Klaus Thüsing a university lecturer and Ernst Walthemate a high-ranking civil servant.

With the exception of the Oberhausen council official Erich Meinike, all the rebels are intellectuals. None of them suffered any real hardship in their youths and they all have university educations behind them. They are almost all members of the liberal profession and in the past one would have been more likely to find men with their professional background in the FDP.

The SPD spent years trying to attract members of the liberal professions and civil servants to its ranks. It wanted to be the party of progress and therefore had to form an alliance with the intellectuals. In this it has succeeded to a remarkable extent. Intellectuals play a more prominent role in the SPD than workers.

Intellectuals, however, are not as easy to keep in line as faithful, disciplined workers. They are also more ambitious, claiming the right to lead the party.

It is not a question of a possible split within the SPD. It is much more likely that the influence of the intellectuals will increase with their numbers. This will reduce the capacity for action which every governing party needs. Intellectuals as a group tend to be unrealistic.

Their rejection of the anti-terror law can only be understood in terms of their belief that this country is increasingly reducing the rights of the individual. In fact all they are doing is making general *conclusions about purely marginal* problems from within their own horizons, namely the academic life.

If utopians such as Coppik and Hansen gain influence realistic policies become more and more difficult and in the end impossible.

It is symptomatic that the rebels' movement is directed against Helmut Schmidt, who is trying to pursue practical and as far as possible non-ideological policies. This is precisely what the members of this group cannot accept. Nor are they impressed by the argument that the SPD has to consider the opinions of its coalition partners.

In their view it is essential that the SPD should pursue the right policies. And if it cannot do that, they argue, it should give up politics altogether.

The whole problem would not be too worrying if the group concerned was small. The party could drop these MPs in the course of two or three elections. The trouble is that these MPs have the backing of large groups within the party, who applaud louder as they make life mores difficult for the party leadership and in particular for the Chancellor.

These groups dominate a number of constituencies and their representatives will not disappear from political life in the forseeable future. It is far mor likely that their influence will increase.

With the increase of their influence, the strength of the SPD will probably decline. It would mean the Social Democrats would always be second best in elections. The present coalition with the FDP will hold out for some time yet, but the warnings of the FDP leadership are getting louder and louder.

In the long run, the FDP cannot afford to be sucked into the SPD's fearsome maelstrom.

Wolfgang Wagner

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 25 February 1978)

■ HOME AFFAIRS

Scapegoat hunt now chasing trade unions

If only Economic Affairs Minister Otto Graf Lambsdorff had remained silent. Granted, in a newspaper interview a few days ago he only pointed to the Government's annual economic report, deducing from it that "Everybody can figure out that the 1978 wage agreements must remain below the 5 per cent mark."

But is it the height of diplomatic acumen to say this at the very point when Baden-Württemberg's and Northrhine-Westphalia's mediators are meeting in order to work out a wage compromise? Unless, of coure, the Minister wants to exert pressure on the parties to the collective bargaining.

But what would that achieve? Pressure makes for counter-pressure — and this applies not only in physics but to psychology as well. And a great deal of psychological pressure has been exerted on the trade unions in the past six months. So much so that every public statement that can remotely be interpreted as pressure only serves to stiffen resistance. This is clear in statements made by the unions.

In perusing the public statements of the past few months it appears as if there is only one culprit for the malaise of our economy: the unions and their wage policy.

And on rereading the *recipes for the restoration of economic growth and full employment*, we find that they all propound the same formula: the trade unions must exercise wage restraint.

But this is an over-simplification. The unions are told that labour has become too expensive and that many businessmen deplore the fact that German wages are higher than those in America. The chemical industry worked out recently that its wage costs (including fringe costs) are 19 per cent higher than those of its American competitors.

Although everybody shirks openly blaming the trade unions, the impression is nevertheless created over wage negotiations that it is up to the unions to remedy the situation.

But let us do a bit of figuring. At the present rate of exchange of DM2.15 per dollar, an hourly wage of 12 deutschmarks corresponds to 5.58 dollars. If we take the exchange rate of four years ago (DM3.60 per dollar), the same wage would amount to a mere 3.33 dollars.

Even the most restrained wage policy could never offset such a rapid deterioration of the exchange rate. And certainly no German trade union can compete with wages in Korea or Singapore even if it were to accept a drastic reduction in the standard of living of its members.

Or let us take another example. In the present wage conflict the employers like to *quote the views* of the Advisory Council of Economic Experts (dubbed the Five Wise Men) that wage agreements involving 3 per cent increases would provide 200,000 of our unemployed with jobs.

This creates the impression that solving the unemployment problem is solely contingent upon wage agreements. The responsibility for our unemployment is thus squarely tossed into the lap of the ons. By the same token no mention is made of the fact that the Five Wise Men pin their hopes of achieving full employment through economic growth "primarily but not solely on the unions' wage policy."

There is also no mention that the same council included many ifs and buts in its arguments and repeals its proposals for capital accumulation by labour. Productivity, market opportunities, export chances, monetary policy and, last but not least, the mood of business must be viewed as decisive. Union policy represents not even a significant segment of this spectrum.

The unions are once more caught in the old cleft stick: In boom periods they are called upon to exercise restraint to prevent inflation; during a recession they are called upon to be moderate because only thus can jobs be provided and preserved.

Apart from a few lapses, the German trade unions have proved that they have more commonsense than unions in other industrialised nations.

By means of the annual economic report and the report of the Five Wise Men the Federal Government played the part prescribed by the anti-inflation legislation. It is now up to parties to collective bargaining to do their part. The forthcoming tug-of-war will become tougher the more the unions are made the nations's scapegoat.

Heinz Michaels

(Die Zeit, 17 February 1978)

Income-pegged pensions end begins uncertainty for old

DEUTSCHES ALLGEMEINES SONNTAGSBLATT

The Federal Republic of Germany's internationally-praised pension scheme (whereby pensions are pegged to the incomes of workers) ends next year after 22 years.

The policy began with the major pensions reform of 1957 and will end on 1 January 1979 when the far-reaching decisions of the federal government and the coalition parties aimed at putting the social security pensions fund on an even keel financially come into effect.

Under the verbose declarations of Social Democratic and Free Democratic politicians lies the bare fact that pensioners will have to forgo the right to proceed from salary to pension without undue financial stress.

This was the criterion on which the original pensions reform was based.

Government and the coalition parties have now severed the ties between the pensions and incomes of the working population as of 1 January 1979, initially for three years.

Without regard for incomes, pensions *will be increased by 4.5 per cent* from 1 January 1979; another 4 per cent will be added in 1980. Thereafter, labour and management will each have to pay an additional 0.5 per cent in contributions.

The dynamic pensions formula, which should guarantee that pensioners participate in rising incomes, has thus fallen away for the next three years. No-one knows what will follow. If pensioners are thus placed at the mercy of the government they will clearly become the weakest segment of our society.

The extent of this weakness is borne out by the fact that neither the government nor the coalition parties considered it necessary to announce the full extent of their pensions fund rehabilitation measures in good time.

These measures do not only affect people drawing pensions from white collar workers', employers' and miners' insurances, but also the disabled, invalid war veterans and pensioners paid by the agriculture pensions fund. They have all been deprived of the dynamism of their pensions.

Even the most fanatic of do-gooders realise today that it is impossible to plug the hole in the pension fund without financial cuts. In other words, the Federal Government had no reason to fear a fight on all fronts. Even business associations such as Northrhine-Westphalia's *Confederation of Employers' Associations* consider it possible to rehabilitate the pensions fund without destroying the whole system.

It has been suggested that pensions be adusted to the working population's incomes of the previous year. That would have brought them up to date. It has also been suggested that pensions be governed by net rather than gross incomes as is now the case.

And, finally, it was proposed that pensioners pay a gradually increasing contribution towards their health insurance. These measures would have provided the missing DM30,000 million by 1982.

Other critics of the government's policy fear that the coalition parties were loath to increase the contributions of the working population — which, according to trade union experts among others, could have met the deficit — because higher contributions would have absorbed the money needed to help put our economy back on its feet, and because added burdens on the working population would have reduced the election chances of the coalition parties.

Here the Chancellor's sights seem to be on the 1980 general election, while Labour Minister Herbert Ehrenberg and Minister of Economic Affairs Otto Graf Lambsdorff assign absolute priority to economic considerations.

It seems obvious that Herr Ehrenberg does not think in terms of social affairs. For instance an employment promotion law that would counter lack of career opportunities and unemployment with the instruments of social policy and stimulate the economy is alien to Herbert Ehrenberg.

The men who evolved this law now hardly stand a chance of saving their policy. The Social Democrat Ernst Schellenberg — in 1969 the SPD's leading social affairs politician — who con-

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Limit to state jobs – Schmidt

Addressing the civil servants' congress of the Confederation of German Trade Uunions (DGB), Chancellor Helmut Schmidt opposed an across-the-board enlargement of the civil service.

The Chancellor conceded that there were certain sectors, for instance the social services, in which the state could do something to combat unemployment.

According to Herr Schmidt, the 1978 budget demonstrates even more clearly than that of the previous year that Bonn is prepared to abandon its restrictive employment policy in the civil service.

He stressed, however, that those demanding an out-and-out employment campaign must ask how long the Government will be able to finance this.

New civil service posts, he went on, will only be created where long-lasting additional tasks are anticipated. He was concerned about the growing burden on German workers of taxes and social security contributions. He said he had "become very sensitive concerning the increase of these burdens."

According to the Chancellor, civil service training facilities are not fully utilised. He called on works council members to explore the issue.

Herr Schmidt told the 500 delegates and guests that civil servants had to be more critical. "If a civil servant receives assinine instructions from above he must say so because he would otherwise fall short of doing his duty."

In general, he said the civil servant had *no reason to* complain about his reputation. In fact, he said, "he is better than his reputation."

Herr Schmidt lamented that devotion to duty among civil servants frequently went with treating the citizen as a "mere number."

The best course for the civil service would be to remedy this attitude. He rejected any "ridiculing of the civil service through generalisations about the persecution of radical elements in connection with the Extremists Act.'

Ulrich Lüke

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 23 February 1978)

Hire more, says union leader

Heinz-Oskar Vetter, Chairman of the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB), has called *for an* enlargement of the civil service and the employment of more staff.

Speaking at the civil servants' congress organised by the DGB, Herr Vetter made this demand while criticising an economic policy in which the state's role was that of a "fire brigade" permitted to intervene only when the house is on fire.

"If the guardians of our market economy and of private initiative claim that the trade unions demand more state authority, all I can answer is: 'Right you are!' " he said.

Herr Vetter believes there is a reservoir of jobs in neglected community work such as education, medical prophylaxis, the integration of elderly people into society, the care of the handicapped and environment protection.

On the previous day Chancellor Schmidt conceded to the congress that there were a number of sectors in which jobs could be provided. But he also drew attention to the cost limits.

The special position of the civil service compared with its counterparts abroad must not, according to Heinz-Oskar Vetter, lead to the fallacious conclusion that we must rid ourselves of officialdom. But he considers it necessary to modernise civil service regulations, as the DBG has demanded since 1968.

It was necessary to discuss the question whether civil servants should forever be exempted from contributing towards their pensions.

He warned against the handed-down concept of the civil servants taken into account by lawmakers and the judiciary, quoting the problematic interpretation of the civil servants's special obligation of "loyalty towards the state." This was contrary to the constitutionally-guaranteed free access to civil service careers.

(Die Welt, 22 February 1978)



■ MILITARY AFFAIRS

Georg Leber: a hard act to follow

DEUTSCHES ALLGEMEINES SONNTAGSBLATT

Georg Leber was Minister of Defence in Bonn until the recent Cabinet reshuffle. He was obviously reluctant to leave his post but had no choice after a series of scandals in his ministry.

Before his resignation, Leber went to Kiel, Oldenburg and Lahn-Wetzlar to take the salute from his troops. In his parka and black beret he looked more like a general than a Minister.

For 12 years, Leber and the Bundeswehr were almost synonymous. One frequently heard the phrase: "What would we do without Leber?", a phrase the Minister liked to hear and occasionally even used himself.

The pomp and emotion of his departure have distracted attention from the question: what was the reason for this fine Minister's unstoppable decline?

Paradoxically, his popularity with the troops was one factor. Leber is a friendly, outgoing man, a former trades union boss. He never had the least difficulty communicating with the troops, and this stood him in good stead on manoeuvres and inspections.

Within the hierarchical bureaucratic atmosphere of the Ministry of Defence, where heels can be heard clicking dutifully to attention, Leber's friendliness was out of place.

Greater distance and authority are called for here, where the motto is: comradeship is good, but strict control is better. Georg Leber could not attune his behaviour to the circumstances, and this was his downfall — his inability to get on with the military establishment.

Every Defence Minister has had his difficulties with Bundeswehr generals. Generals Müller-Hildebrandt, Trettner, Grashey, Karst and Schnez immediately spring to mind. This is an occupational hazard, but no other Minister of Defence was ever suffered so much at the hands of insubordinate generals or behaved so inconsistently when faced with this insubordination.

General Rall visited South Africa without his Minister's permission. Leber retired him. General Hildebrandt Inspector of the Army, stood next to the Spanish dictator Franco at a parade in Madrid. Leber took no action against him.

Generals Krupinski and Franke were attacked for their contacts with extreme right wing former Wehrmacht officer Rudel. It was not until they replied by attacking Herbert Wehner, chairman of the SPD *parliamentary party, that* Leber decided to sack them.

Leber's parliamentary secretary of state Schmidt-Würgendorf was allowed to remain in office despite being involved in a political scandal.

General Wagemann, commander of the Bundeswehr Military Academy, allowed a Chilean colonel to speak to his cadets. The Chilean launched into a eulogy of the Pinochet regime. Wagemann sat back and said nothing. He did not condemn the colonel's views. Georg Leber took no action.

Georg Leber miscalculated the political consequences of some of his generals' acts. His thinking was one-dimensional, yet it was precisely this which made the Bundeswehr the strongest and most effective West European force in NATO.

Thanks to Leber, the Germans arms industry enjoyed a boom the like of which it had not seen for many a year, and the Bundeswehr *was better equipped* than it had been when Helmut Schmidt and Franz Josef Strauss had been in charge.

Leber forced through the multinational programme for the multi-purpose combat aircraft Tornado — the successor to the Starfighter — despite rocketing costs in the development phase. The German Luftwaffe got the joint German-French combat aircraft Alpha Jet to replace the Fiat G 91.

Again thanks to Leber's determination, the German navy was able to realise its ambitious project of building six frigates, despite opposition from defence experts.

The army got its second generation of Leopard tanks and the third generation is now being developed. The Bundeswehr also has Leber to thank for the Flak tank Gepard and the Flak rocket tank Roland.

Leber was always keen that the Bundeswehr should get the latest technology, opting for the expensive and controversial American AWAC flying radar system and pushing the cruise missile and the neutron bomb. While Leber was in office, the defence budget rose by an average of 14.3 per cent a year, as against increases of only 3.3 per cent when the CDU were in power.

Because of his insistence on high stanards of weaponry in the Bundeswehr, his seniority and his low profile on security matters, Leber was a very popular man at Nato conferences. Georg Leber never got into anybody's bad books. His relationship with ambitious Minister of Foreign Affairs Hans-Dietrich Genscher and our American allies was excellent.

Former Minister of Finance Hans Apel will have a difficult task as Leber's successor. Apel has built up a reputation as a politician rather than a military expert.

He will have to turn his attention not only to the rocketing costs in the Bundeswehr, but to its internal problems: the reformed army structure, the controversial reform of the leadership structure and the neglected problems of "inner leadership" and political education.

Herr Apel will also have to wrest control from the military establishment, often too independent when Leber was Minister. He also has to make important political decisions on the AWACS, the cruise missile and the neutron bomb. These decisions could bring him into conflict with Minister of Foreign Affairs Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Hans Apel will need all the political support his friend and protector Helmut Schmidt can give him. He will also have to seek advice from the Chancellor, himself a former Minister of Defence.

Bernd C. Hesslein

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 26 February 1978)



Farewell inspection: Georg Leber taking leave of his troops. (Photo: dpa)

New-look plan for press German soldiers scorn

The German Bundeswehr spends almost five million deutschmarks a year on newspapers and magazines on military matters for its troops.

The range of topics in these publications is wide. The broadsheet *Bundeswehr aktuell* is aimed mainly at conscipts and appears four times a week. There are monthly magazines for the army, the navy and the air force, entitled *Heer, Marine* and *Luftwaffe*.

Professional and short-service commission soldiers receive the military magazine *Soldat und Technik, Truppenpraxis* and *Wehrausbildung in Wort und Bild* free. The list is rounded off by *loyal*, the "German defence magazine" for reservists, and *Europäische Wehrkunde*, a "magazine on defence matters."

It is an impressive-sounding range of publications. The only trouble is that generally the troops do not read them.

The Ministry of Defence, anxious to find out why, has just paid the Institute for Applied Social Sciences (Infas) DM25,000 to tell them why the majority of Bundeswehr troops do not respond to these publications.

The conclusion Infas reaches in its detailed analysis will not surprise the publications' readers. In its opinion, Bundeswehr publications simply do not cater for the real needs and interests of the majority of troops.

The reaction of the conscripts was particularly worrying for media strategists in the Ministry of Defence.

Infas points out rather cautiously that the troop magazines and *Bundeswehr aktuell* only have a small group of regular readers.

The general lack of interest among ordinary troops is explained by the fact that they regard them as house magazines reflecting the views of the management (officers). The treatment of their problems and interests, conscripts complain, is inadequate. They cannot identify with *Bundeswehr aktuell*.

The young conscripts' response to the troops magazines with their glossy covers is similar.

The Infas study will certainly accelerate plans in the Ministry of Defence to restructure their media. Those responsible are ready to acknowledge their mistakes.

Colonel Ernst Otto Engelmann explains the lack of interest thus: "There was a plethora of magazines all competing for attention and trying to outdo one another."

These publications received glowing readers' letters from officers and this blinded them to the fact that the ordinary soldier simply was not interested.

General Staff officer Engelhardt, deputy director of the information and publicity in the Bundeswehr, has decided to adopt a policy of "forward retreat."

In future there will be one major daily for all conscripts instead of *Bundeswehr aktuell* (edition 30,000 on Thursdays, 52,000 on Sundays). It will also replace the separate magazine for army, navy and air force, of which about 100,000 copies are printed every month.

This new paper will appear four days a week and on Saturday evening will have an extensive sports coverage — just in time for troops returning from weekend leave.

The style will be similar to the popular press. The planners are still considering to put what into the paper, but a large amount of space will be devoted to the hobbies and interests of ordinary soldiers.



The new paper will be financed from the *Bundeswehr aktuell* budget (1.3 million deutschmarks per annum) and the budgets of *loyal* and the monthly troop magazines (2,1 million deutschmarks). The paper will also bring out occasional supplements on matters of interest to reservists.

However, the three armed forces are reluctant to part with their separate magazines, which allow them to praise their own merits and polish up their images. They will continue to be published until the end of the year, despite the expense.

The experimental conscripts' paper will be published in certain areas from the beginning of next year. Engelhardt hopes the experiment will convince doubters in the ministry of the need. Only then will the decision be made as to who will produce the paper.

The restructuring of the military magazines is likely to prove more difficult. The amalgamation of *Soldat und Technik, Truppenpraxis* and *Wehrausbildung in Wort und Bild* into one paper aimed at all ranks is a logical step, recommended by Infas.

The annual cost will be in the order of 2.2 million deutschmarks. However, the military leadership is unhappy about this scheme. Engelhardt admits that he sees little prospect of movement on this front.

If this process of concentration were carried through, it would mean that there would be some money left in the annual budget of 2.5 million deutschmarks for a German magazine of security. It would be of a high scientific standard with an international circulation. This was another Infas recommendation.

The call for such a magazine is not at all new, but in the past the Bundeswehr has been reluctant to grant the money. It has been too anxious to preserve its wide range of publications.

Christian Potyka

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 17 February 1978)

■ INTERVIEW

Hauff promises greater scrutiny of technology

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Volker Hauff, Bonn's new Research Minister, sees no reason to change the political course of his predecessor Hans Matthöfer.

In his former post as parliamentary state secretary in the ministry he had a hand in charting that course and he intends to continue on it. But this does not mean that Herr Hauff will entirely forgo setting new policy accent.

In an interview with *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Volker Hauff (at 37 Bonn's youngest Cabinet member) advocated greater awareness by the government in dealing with technological problems and developments.

"The time when technical progress was more or less equated with social progress is over. I believe that we must treat new technologies with circumspection," said Herr Hauff.

As an example, Herr Hauff quoted the fast breeder. He pointed out that the pros and cons of such a development should be weighed in open discussion as early as possible and before arriving at complex decisions.

But not only nuclear energy raises questions of political security.

Herr Hauff, a trained economist who ~~specialised in electronic data processing~~ during his university days, says: "We have always maintained that it is impermissible in a modern industrialised society to pick out one risk and then discuss it in absolute categories, because this must lead to fallacious conclusions.

"The reason is that other risks which have only limited similarity are not taken into account. Assuming that this is correct, it must be the task of state research and technology policy to attempt a systematic analysis of the risks a modern industrial society involves."

There are many other aspects technical, scientific, economic, labour, vocational and foreign trade.

Says Volker Hauff: "I have no illusions concerning the complexity of this issue. We have for the past six months pondered the problems involved. I am determined to continue my work in this sector with all due dispatch. This work will not lead to major new insights in the short term, but it will force us to systematically ponder the risks involved."

In this way, the Minister hopes, the public will be made aware that the government concerns itself with citizens' worries and apprehensions. This is important if a detached discussion on new technologies is to begin.

"We must not permit ourselves to hope that peace and order will be preserved by the police."

One of the reasons for excessively emotional public reaction in the Federal Republic, he said, was "the people felt that their arguments — as in the case of the fast breeder — were not sufficiently taken into account."

Asked whether the dialogue with the citizens' initiatives would be continued, the Minister replied: "Yes, without a doubt. There is also no strategy aimed at getting the government' standpoint across come what may, but merely an attempt to discuss various differing standpoints concerning new technologies, to evaluate these standpoints and to enable the citizen to take part in the opinion-forming process."

Continuity is to be the guiding principle of the new Minister's energy policy. Herr Hauff stressed that the light water reactor has reached its full economic potential.

Apart from safety research, he said, it was time for business to bear all costs for the operation, including uranium prospecting, enrichment technology, reprocessing and final storage of waste.

Efforts in non-nuclear energy research must continue unabated. Even in the past few years there have been massive shifts, and nothing can be achieved by a tour de force. The financial means have to be provided little by little. Minister Hauff's special attention will be focussed on coal technology.

"In other major sectors such as solar energy and insulation technology we have already made a great leap forward. We must now organise demand in such a manner as to make this successful technology commercially viable as well."

The research Minister said it was a disaster that the veto of the CDU-governed states defeated the Government's energy saving programme in the Bundesrat (Upper House).

This means the loss of valuable time — not only in saving energy but also in the development of an industry with considerable global chances the in future.

The same applies to remote heating systems, where promising new developments have been achieved. Further research subsidies are unlikely to provide new impulses. Funds for non-nuclear energy research should now be concentrated on coal technology and development of storage technology.

Volker Hauff also wants to look across our borders. In Britain, for instance, he recently learned that the Labour Government is pinning its hopes on energy from wave motion. By means of a wall 120 kilometres into the sea, his British opposite number, Wedgewood Benn, hopes to harness enough energy te meet the nation's total energy requirements.

Despite major engineering problems, Herr Hauff believes this to be an interesting proposition for Britain. He feels the Germans, too, should consider whether to embark on a similar operation.

"We must pay careful attention to our scientists and technicians, to what they consider feasible, to what they feel can be organised and where research promotion through market impulses should be supplemented by the state."

"We must prick up our ears on an international scale in order to learn from the experiences of others."

The Minister put particular stress on cooperation with the Third World over the utilisation of solar energy. He intends to go to Egypt this year to see a 10-kilowatt solar power station Egypt is building with German assistance.

Herr Hauff intends to develop the fast breeder further, but without ramrodding it through. There is a sceptical ring to his voice when he points out that there will be no decision about its commercial introduction before 1990. The demonstration model in Kalkar is likely to be operational by 1983.

"We have undertaken to gather operational experience for at least one year. At the same time the opinion-forming process within Parliament will be intensified."

In the course of decision-making in 1984/85 about the prototype, Herr Hauff anticipates that three aspects will evolve:

"The operational experience with the reactor in Kalkar, domestic policy discussion — probably within the framework of an investigating committee — and international discussion which will keep us on tenterhooks during the nenext two years."

He stressed that it was absolutely necessary for "earnest and controversial discussions."

"We have a clean line of thought in Government, the SPD Parliamentary Party and in the party rank and file."

Concerning the future work programme of the Max Planck Institute for Plasma Physics in Munich-Garchin, Herr Hauff said the Joint European Torus



Volker Hauff

(Photo: Sven Simon)

(JET) programme was not the only fusion research but only one possible aspect — although JET seems to be the most interesting.

But there is no way of knowing whether this technical aspect will provide a breakthrough. For this reason it is important that the Garching research station continue its work in such fields as stellar atom research and laser technology apart from JET.

Generally, research in communications, technology, energy, fusion and defence must be concentrated. Garching seems the obvious place for it, but Herr Hauff has formed no definite opinion.

He is convinced that the "Humanisation of Work" will be stepped up in future although a considerable standard has been achieved.

What matters is to evolve a strategy of application. "Demonstration projects alone won't get us any further. We must convey our findings to business and industry, which should make use of them, although this will be a rather difficult process."

This also applies to the office and service industry sectors.

We must combat the trend in modern office technology — a trend promoted by data processing — whereby work is divided into segments similar to the situation at the beginning of industrialisation.

"Unless we keep alert," says the Minister, "the same mistakes will recur. In other words, we will be faced with a fragmentation of work under pure technical efficiency criteria. This will not only lead to a lack of wellbeing, but will eventually engender a loss of efficiency. We are here in entirely new territory on a global scale. But this is no shortcoming. In fact, it can even make us accept the challenge and take on a spearhead role internationally."

Among Herr Hauff's first appointments is a discussion with the new head of the Ministry for Economic Cooperation (development aid), Rainer Offergeld. Hauff wants to impart life to cooperation in the development sector, something lacking up to now.

"This will change nothing in our willingness to orientate our research and development capacity more by the real needs of the deloping nations," he says.

Research institutions were full of scientists interested in developing new technologies for the Third World.

It was obvious that the developing nations themselves must be permitted to state their requirements.

Udo Bergdoll

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 17 February 1978)

Third World talks plan

Continued from page 2

veloping countries' manufactures and the structural problems in Europe.

"Free access to European markets presents greater problems of adaptation in times of stagnation or recession than when the economy is booming," M. Cheysson says.

The proposal sounds suspiciously like covert protectionism. "Normal market rules are to remain in force," M. Cheysson says, and the outcome of consultations is not to be binding on either side.

But it remains to be seen how the commission proposes to use this concept to solve the problems of limited intake capacity in the EEC and growing competitiveness by the developing countries.

"If it had been up to us," says an associate of Wilhelm Haferkamp, this country's vice-president of the European Commission, "we should have frankly admitted that at times of crisis we would resort to protective clauses.

"But the advocates of free trade are not in a majority on the current commission."

The Brussels Commission lays itself open to an embarrassing question here. How does it propose to defend liberalism and free trade if it is not even prepared to guarantee the developing countries (and the ACP countries are among the poorest in the Third World) access to the Common Market.

As one EEC official readily admits, there can be little doubt of the risk in such consultations.

"The developing countries will be told that they ought not to invest in the industries in which they have laboriously attained a degree of competitiveness."

If the Common Market countries were then forced to resort to protective measures, they could blame the developing countries for going ahead with industrialisation schemes.

"We can but hope this whole idea will prove a non-starter," one advocate of liberal trade policies says.

Hans-Hagen Bremer

(Die Zeit, 24 February 1978)

■ ECONOMY

Eastern swap deals bring back the barter economy to Western Europe

Barter deals have become the order of the day in trade with the East Bloc. The Federal Republic of Germany's trading partners in the East — usually state-operated foreign trade operations — insist on paying only part of the purchase price in cash.

The rest, and in many instances the full amount, is paid in kind. The reason is the East Bloc's notorious shortage of foreign exchange.

German industrialists are frequently paid for export goods in things like felt slippers, rabbit furs, tinned vegetables and onions.

Thus, for instance, the Krupp concern landed a DM240 million order from the GDR for two industrial plants, the condition being that Krupp be paid in East German goods.

The mammoth steel concern maintains its own trading organisation solely for the sale of such barter goods. Among the merchandise provided by the GDR was, among other things, a large consignment of women's tights.

The most spectacular of the recent examples is the supply by Volkswagen of 10,000 of its Rabbit motorcars to the GDR. Payment will be made in a wide range of goods rather than cash. These include automotive parts, heating oil, coal and numerous other items for which VW has a use in its own production plants. Some of the barter goods have still to be agreed upon.

But the seller's ability to use the barter goods is rare.

What, for instance, is a supplier of machinery to do with a large consignment of sauerkraut, jam and work clothes? Perhaps he can use some of the food in his cafeteria, but for the rest he must find a buyer. A case is a German machinery exporter paid with a large shipment of plastic falsies — items obsolete in the West.

This problem has led to the establishment of companies specialising in the brokerage of barter goods. There has been further specialisation in items such as tomatoes, cameras and machine tools. Munich has a broker who specialised in selling German machinery against Rumanian vegetables.

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

Other West European countries have similar problems in dealings with the East Bloc. Italy's Fiat concern, for instance, is Europe's largest egg dealer.

A major problems for the Western exporter is that he usually cannot get cash for his goods until he has managed to resell the merchandise received in payment.

Another irksome fact for businessman and the German authorities is payment by the East in services such as the transport of cargo by Eastern shipping at dumping prices.

There are of course Eastern products which have their place on the German market, such as the natural gas which the Soviets provided in exchange for Mannesmann pipes. This was not only a bilateral but a trilateral deal.

For one thing, Mannesmann was able to utilise its production capacity to the full; for another, a group of German banks provided the financing in the form of credits; thirdly, the pipes were used in the pipeline through which the gas is being conveyed to Germany.

While in the early seventies the East Bloc offered primarily agricultural and some semi-finished products in payment, the proportion of finished products and machinery has been rising steadily.

The East is trying to open up a market in the West for its industrial goods, leaving it to their Western trading partners to worry about selling the merchandise.

As a rule this can only be done by considerable price concessions, since it is generally accepted that the East provides the wrong goods at the wrong time, as a spokesman for the German Wholesale and Exporters' Association put it.

In many instances Eastern industrial products are below Western standards. If this were not so, the East would not have to sell its goods in this roundabout way. The matter is aggravated further by long delivery times and poor service.

Even agricultural products are hard to market in the West. The EEC agricultural market is saturated. Moreover, quality standards and the Community's import regulations hamper such deals.

Due to their shortage of foreign exchange, the East Bloc countries insist on ever-higher barter quotas in their dealings with German exporters. In most deals at least 35 to 50 per cent is paid in goods.

And the present trend is to increase this quota. As borne out by the VW example, payment in kind only is increasing.

German companies have for some time provided the East with ready-made factories, usually paid for with goods produced in them.

The chemicals industry especially is suffering since the chemical factories provided are usually paid for with products already flooding the German market.

To make matters worse, some German companies such as the chemical giant Hoechst have subsidiaries which build factories and sell them to the East on a barter basis.

A massive order involving DM10,000 million is now under negotiation. The Russians would like a German company to erect a gigantic chemicals factory in Tomsk, Western Siberia, to process 10 million tons of crude oil.

But the bugbear is that the Soviet Union would like to pay in goods abundant in Germany. Moreover, the supply would extend over many years, and no company can predict developments on world markets.

Trade and industry are becoming increasingly wary of barter deals. As a spokesman for the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry put it: "This is a relapse into mediaeval barter."

As opposed to the large concerns, medium-sized businesses tend to steer clear of barter deals with the East, fearing possible losses.

An expert on Eastern trade in a heavily export-oriented industrial association fears, however, that "such deals could continue until they have a thoroughly adverse effect on our economy."

Meanwhile, the East's government traders are indefatigable. If they fail in negotiating a barter deal with the West, they give in and pay in cash. But only if the deal concerns goods in which they are particularly interested.

This provides highly specialised companies in the West, such as manufacturers of medical appliances, with an edge and enables them to reject non-cash deals.

In the long run barter deals are anything but advantageous to the East. Many German exporters are making up for the risk bartering involves by increasing their prices. The East Bloc traders, on the other hand, are forced to make price concessions to the detriment of the image of their goods.

Peter Stotz

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 18 February 1978)

Continued from page 4

ceived a dynamic and productive social affairs policy is ill.

Alas, the SPD has found no successor who would point out to the party that the word "social" should have a certain significance.

Former Labour Minister Hans Katzer, CDU, has only a small following. The CDU, under the influence of economists like Professor Kurt Biedenkopf and the members of the CDU Economic Council, intends to protest against the government's pensions policy, but its social affairs politicians lack the backing of a powerful political party. CDU Chairman Helmut Kohl is not a Konrad Adenauer for whom the major social reform of the fifties was domstic affairs issue number one.

It is not enough for the Opposition to cry "You're cheating the pensioners!" Instead, they should cry "Hands off the principles of our social order."

Günther Windschild

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 26 February 1978)

Foreign trade figures seen as too rosy

The Federal Republic of Germany's foreign trade is definitely not in as good a state as the latest statics seem to indicate. The monetary unrest of the past few months has given the picture an unwarranted gloss.

The mood amoing exporters at year's end was depressed, according to the Bundesbank. Taking 1977 as a whole, the high capital exports have considerably reduced the imbalances of payments of other countries — notwithstanding widespread views to the contrary.

According to preliminary figures, the balance of payments surplus diminished by a mere 0.3 per cent to DM8,200 million last year. This was considerably less than initially anticipated, due primarily to the high export surplus at the end of the year.

Due to the anticipated further revaluation of the deutschmark, foreign buyers bought earlier than planned, while German importers showed restraint. Furthermore, some major orders issued in 1976 were still being delivered. In any event, the 4 per cent increase in exports (in real terms) in the last quarter of 1977 was considerably higher than expected considering the small influx of orders in the preceding months.

Hopes of a further increase in exports in the next few months are unwarranted due to the higher price of the deutschmark and sluggish economies in countries importing from the Federal Republic.

The continuous deutschmark revaluation will be detrimental to this country's exports. To retain its position on international markets and prevent further redundancies (every fourth job in this country depends on exports) industry will have to reduce production costs to keep its prices stable.

High export figures are a necessity. If the upswing sets in, out imports will rise during the next few months. And the deficit in the balance of the service industries which rose considerably last year — primarily due to foreign travel — is unlikely to diminish.

The same applies to money transfers by foreign workers to their home countries.

The trend of the past few years towards diminishing balance of payments surpluses is likely to continue. Last year's surplus amounted to a mere 0.7 per cent of GNP, compared with 0.9 per cent two years earlier. Japan's surplus is 1.6 per cent and Switzerland's 5.3 per cent of GNP.

The balance of payments surplus was, furthermore, largely offset by long-term capital exports. These the balance dropped from a surplus of DM8,100 million in 1976 to a deficit of DM4,200 million last year.

In the long run, it is of particular importance for the German economy that this country's companies increase their direct investments abroad. In the past two years alone direct investments abroad rose by DM1,500 million to DM6.400 million. Foreign investments in this country amounted to a mere DM3,000 million, compared with DM6,600 million in 1974.

This is primarily due to production costs rising faster in this country in the past few years than they did abroad. Due to the revaluation of the deutschmark, it also became more lucrative for German companies to buy equities in foreign firms, while foreign participation in German companies became costlier.

German companies must invest abroad in order to maintain their position on foreign markets. This trend is likely to continue and effect growth in the export sector, as borne out by American experiences in the fifties and sixties.

Exports will continue, but high quality products will capture a larger share. This presupposes investments. But alas, excessive wage deals and monetary unrest have put a damper on investments.

The prospects for German exporters are anything but rosy, since the monetary upheavals of the past months were politically motivated.

Hans-Jürgen Mahnke

(Die Welt, 18 February 1978)

■ SHIPPING

Freight traffic talks hold hope for fairer sharing

Shippers in West Germany now have the prospect of an improved share in freight traffic destined for the Eastern Bloc.

Talks about talks may not seem much of an accomplishment, yet the Bonn Ministry of Transport is in a fairly happy mood. An issue which saw no progress for years is now in flux, the ministry claims.

Soviet officials, too, are at pains to avoid the impression that no progress is possible — even on a topic such as shipping, where views are unchanged.

Negotiations started by Transport Minister Kurt Gscheidle in Moscow last autumn and continued recently by two Soviet delegations in Bonn are to contune.

Specific moves have at least been discussed, if only in road transport.

The two sides agreed, for instance, that it would be sensible if road tax on goods vehicles in the other country were gradually phased out.

The Soviet delegation even agreed to consider the German request for an interim reduction of the high road tax in the Soviet Union to the lower levels in West Germany.

Swifter customs clearance is also to be considered. The Soviet delegation even appreciated the desire of German shippers for a larger slice of the freight cake, including imports from the Eastern Bloc.

Shipping will be discussed this autumn in Moscow. Unlike road haulage, views on shipping made no headway in the first round of talks.

The root of the trouble is the success of Soviet shipping lines in landing contracts to handle freight between this country and others.

This country pointed out that Bonn is interested in the German merchant marine remaining competitive. The Russians were unimpressed.

Shortly before the talks the Hamburg-based Association of German Shipowners wrote to the Minister of Transport advocating strict quotas for freight handled by Soviet shippers. The association also called for licensing procedures for Soviet line shippers, arguing that German shippers were not getting a fair deal in bilateral trade. Another problem is freedom to set up in business in this country. Since German companies are not allowed subsidiaries in the Soviet Union, the same strictions ought to be imposed here, German shipowners argue.

Domestic manufacturers seem distinctly unlikely to help shippers keep Eastern Bloc operators at bay. In a letter to Karl Heinz Lemmrich, chairman of the Bundestag transport committee, the BDI (Confederation of Federal Republic Industry) goes so far as to deny that the Eastern Bloc undercuts freight rates to an extent that might be called dumping.

Such allegations, the BDI argued, are justified only "if rates and profits of the shipping conferences bore a reasonable relationship to shippers' costs and were not grossly exaggerated in the first place."

Differing interests in this country confront Bonn with a dilemma. How can shippers be helped without hurting the import-export trade.

This is a tough question Bonn Transport Ministry officials are hoping the various interests will resolve before it is called on to take direct action.

Hans-Jürgen Mahnke

(Die Welt, 14 February 1978)



Hamburg's container dock, one of the biggest in Europe.
(Photo: Bildflug Hamburg freig. Luftamt Hamburg Nr. 1023/74)

Shipping trade eager for historic sea rates talks

Shippers, freight agents and insurance companies are anxiously awaiting the outcome of the UN conference on maritime freight rates in Hamburg from 6 to 31 March.

It will be the first UN diplomatic conference ever held in West Germany it will but it will also approve regulations to supersede the Hague convention, in force for nearly 50 years.

A tough tussle is anticipated, although everyone agrees that the existing provisions are in need of revision.

The issue is a demand by the developing countries, who would like shipping companies to take liability for demages arising, say, from fire or crew mishandling.

By the Hague convention shipowners have not been responsible for damage in transit.

Despite international howls of protest from shippers and insurance companies this Third World demand is backed by the United States, Canada, France and Norway.

Insurers in particular are worried about change in the distribution of risk between the cargo owner shipping company.

Claims are simple now. Damage is easy to prove, says Walter Rostock, chairman of the Federal Republic Transport Insurance Association, whereas checking shipowner's liability is more difficult and time-consuming, since the guilty party must be ascertained.

If shipowners are to be made increasingly liable for cargo damage in transit, third-party insurance premiums are sure to skyrocket.

"Freight rates are bound to follow suit," Herr Rostock says. It is wrong to argue that low premiums can stave off increases to any extent.

The problem may be solved in Hamburg. West-Germany, backed by Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Japan, Poland and the Soviet Union, is strictly opposed to any such new provisions.

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 18 February 1978)

Hamburg gets its hundredth container line

Dart Atlantic, a 31,036-ton container freighter, was given a rousing send-off from Waltershof docks, Hamburg, to mark the start of Dart Container Line's weekly service between Europe, including the UK, the eastern seaboard of the United States and Canada.

Hamburg is the only German port served by this new weekly run. Dart is the hundredth container service to call at Hamburg.

Dart Container Line, in business for seven years, is operated jointly by Bristol City Line of Liverpool, CMB of Antwerp and C. Y. Tung of Hong Kong.

Dart's main Continental port is Antwerp, but services now go to Le Havre and Hamburg because a new freighter, the *Dart Canada*, has joined the *Dart Atlantic*, the *Dart Europe* and the *Dart America*.

The freighters each have a capacity of between 1,480 and 1,600 20ft containers.

The *Dart Canada*, built in Bremen, will call at Hamburg on her maiden voyage on 27 February.

Hamburg went in for containers in 1967, since when turnover has increased thirtyfold. In 1967 15,328 containers were handled. Last year's 471,000 was a nine per-cent improvement.

Hamburg is the leading German container port, according to Helmut F. H. Hansen of the port authority. In ten years the weight of containers handled has increased from 91,000 to 4,100,000 tons. and Elbe tunnel. The latest in suspension

Initially container traffic went mainly to the US eastern seaboard — 15,184 of 1967's 15,328 containers. The Far East now accounts for nearly half the container traffic via Hamburg.

But the United States still leads in containerisation. Nearly 100 per cent of general cargo for the US eastern seaboard is containerised.

Only 25.7 per cent of general cargo is containerised from or via Hamburg, which has some of the most modern container facilities in the world.

The city's Waltershof container docks comprise two million square metres, more than the area of Monaco.

They have their own freight railheads and direct road links to the autobahn and Elbe tunnel. The latest in suspension bridges, Köhlbrandbrücke, spans the harbour, linking the container docks with other parts of the port.

There are also eight warehouses with 168,000 square metres (42 acres) of covered storage. A ninth is being built.

More than three kilometres (two miles) of quayside can berth 11 container and semi-container freighters simultaneously.

Dieter F. Hertel

(Die Welt, 21 February 1978)



■ EDUCATION

Politicians take aim at government report on federal education system

The government report on the federal structure of the educational system has severely criticised the inadequacies of the structure and in particular of those states where the CDU is in power, just as the election campaigns in Hamburg and Lower Saxony get under way.

The response of a number of CDU politicians indicates that the report has had the desired effect from the government's point of view. Baden-Württemberg Prime Minister Filbinger described it as "a completely unrealistic bureaucratic effort showing no understanding of the basic problems in schools and universities."

Schleswig Holstein Minister of Education Braun went further, describing it as "nothing but a hindrance" to their work.

Clearly the Bonn Cabinet sees things differently. Interior Minister Werner Maihofer described it as "a highly accurate and legally watertight report, the best we have discussed in the Cabinet since 1969." This seems to be the unanimous opinion of his government colleagues.

Chancellor Schmidt announced that the report would be published when he made his government statement after his election victory in 1976. Prepared by the experts of the Bonn Ministry of Education, its basic line of argument is unmistakable: it adbocates more central government say in the educational system.

The present system, with each state determining its educational policies regardless of what is happening elsewhere, is anything but uniform. Often a pupil's entire academic career and later position in life depends on what state he goes to school in. Parents who have to move from one state to another soon notice that their children find the going hard.

Curricula and even subjects are often different.

Helga Schuchardt, FDP educational expert, says that a teacher trained in Hamburg cannot automatically go and teach in other states.

The SPD/FDP government coalition is determined to make this a major issue in this year's state elections, as well as in the 1980 general election.

It is a sensitive and controversial issue, but there is a lot to be said for more uniformity in the system and the only way to achieve it seems to be by more central government control.

Government spokesman Klaus Bölling seems unwilling to be drawn on the subject. However I gathered from high-ranking government officials that a three-phase concept has been worked out.

The first phase lasting till the end of this year, is to inform the public who is at present responsible for what in the educational system. Former Minister of Education Hemut Rohde says: "The government and the state authorities have been cooperating on educational planning and policy since 1969. This has led many to believe that the government has more says in education than it in fact has."

In the second phase, lasting till autumn 1979 at the latest, the public will be told in government publications of the discrepancies between the various states.

Draft proposals for reform of the system will only be introduced in the third phase, lasting until shortly before the 1980 general election.

Government electoral strategists reckon it would do the coalition nothing but good if the opposition rejected their proposals to reform the educational system just before the election.

The SPD and the FDP are perfectly aware that the CDU/CSU opposition would reject any moves to limit the states' competence for educational policy.

Any act giving more power to the central government on education would need a change in the Basic Law. This in turn requires a two-thirds majority of the Bundestag and the Bundesrat.

The latest agreements between the CDU and CSU mean there can be no change in the Basic Law without CSU agreement. The CSU's stance on educational reform is clear — it wants even more say for the state governments and less for Bonn.

The CDU is in an unhappy position on this issue. Its sister party's attitude means it has no room for manoeuvre.

Some members of the CDU parliamentary party are also unhappy because they would like to see more uniformity and more central government control.

The position of the CDU/FDP state government in Lower Saxony is equally complicated. The coalition agreement between the two parties contains an FDP demand that the coalition support government moves to remove the following areas from state to central government jurisdiction: The enforcement of compulsory education, vocational training, uniformity of transfer regulations and leaving qualifications.

The coalition agreement is clear-cut. The state government of Herr Albrecht (CDU) now cannot remain silent but has to give active support to the principle of more central government control.

This means the CDU "rejection front" is broken. It is also known that the Saarland, also ruled by a CDU/FDP coalition, would not stand in the way of these SPD/FDP demands.

The SPD-ruled states realise the need for greater uniformity. There have been reports of dissension on this issue within the SPD, but they are groundless.

This is indicated by the fact that Peter Glotz, Berlin Education Senator, was elected chairman of the SPD education committee precisely because of his views on the need for more central control.

The Social Democrats find their FDP partners pushing this issue too hard. The FDP want to introduce draft legislation this year to underline that they have always argued for more central government control.

The SPD, on the other hand, do not want the issue decided too soon. They want to keep it alive until the 1980 general election.

Dieter Kassing

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 19 February 1978)

New system over university places

There are to be more university places, special entrance examinations and a lottery system to choose students in overcrowded subjects, the state Education Ministers' Conference (KMK) has decided in Bonn.

Schleswig Holstein Minister of Education Braun, the President of the KMK, said „the new regulations were more acceptable to students" because they meant more flexibility and less reglementation. He hoped it would also reduce the intensity of the struggle for marks in the sixth forms.

Hamburg was the only state to abstain, for constitutional reasons, from voting. Hamburg Minister of Science Biallas (FDP) said he would have preferred a federal agreement (Staatsvertrag) to an agreement between the states.

The treaty is to be signed by state prime ministers on March 17.

(Die Welt, 16 February 1978)

Doctors face hard times says science council

Doctors and dentists in the Federal Republic of Germany may in future have to seek work outside their profession just as other graduates have been forced to do says the Bonn Science Council.

The council, presenting its recommendations for the construction of medical schools, said doctors and dentists had hitherto been a privileged group with high incomes virtually guaranteed for life. The job problems of their university contemporaries had not touched them. Now it seemed this was going to change.

The time was near the council said, when doctors might have to wait for patients and even find work in other areas.

The council based its opinions on developments in the profession. After a slight decline in medical students in the sixties, the number of freshmen has doubled.

There are 10,500 freshmen out of a total of 55,000 medical students. This does not include students originally rejected by medical schools but now accepted after courts upheld their rights.

On the other hand, there has been no significant increase in the number of beds in university clinics, the council said.

The number of lecturers and technical staff has increased but not in proportion to the massive increase in student numbers. Since 1970, would-be doctors no longer spend a period as medical assistants. Instead, they do a practical year.

This has meant even greater demands on clinics. The council fears this could lead to "long waiting lists for medical students wanting to do their clinical training or a reduction in standards, which is quite unacceptable."

The problem cannot be solved even by closer cooperation with non-university clinics or more use of polyclinics.

The council feels that little purpose would be served by increasing the number of beds in university clinics. The costs are too high — DM400,000 to DM800,000 a bed.

Running costs amount to 25 per cent of the original investment cost per year (these figures are not absolutely reliable because not all states provide adequate statistics).

Forty per cent of all investment in university buildings goes to medical faculties. Any further increase would mean less for the other faculties, also expanding. With the student boom expected in the next few years, these faculties will have to teach their students more quickly and more cheaply.

Any dramatic increase in university clinic building would also run counter to the reduction of expenditure in the health system. Even now, there is a danger of "bed mountains" not only in university but in all general hospitals.

Patients now spend less time in hospital — which is unfortunate for medical students, who have less time to observe and treat them, the council says.

Different departments in the state ministries of health are responsible for university and non-university building and there is not enough coordination. The council stressed the need for more cooperation.

The Science Council, unlike certain medical associations, is reluctant to talk of "too many doctors" but stresses the necessity of adaptation.

Up to now, medical graduates have spent their practical year in hospitals. The council recommends that some doctors should do their practical year in general practice that more joint practices be set up, that certain health services now been understaffed, such as country areas, the public health service, psychiatry, social medicine and research should take on more doctors.

Dentistry is a particular problem, says the council. More money has to be invested in dental faculties and there is a particular shortage of university lecturers. Some reasons are the chances of earning far more in private practice, poor standards of equipment and poor working conditions.

The Science Council mentions recruiting foreign dentists for some posts. It is also looking into the possibility of setting up dental clinics outside the universities.

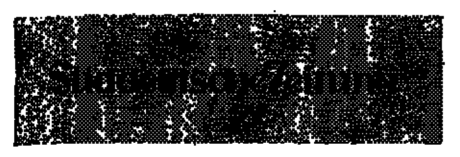
The council rejected the proposal to reintroduce the old form of dental training. It does however stress that according to the German medical profession any qualified doctor can become a dentist and this could be an opportunity to retrain unemployed doctors as dentists.

The council is to publish separate recommendations on dentistry at the end of the year.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 18 February 1978)

■ THE ARTS

Gremm's new film both banal and extravagant



Director Wolf Gremm talks of freedom and what it means to him at the beginning of his film *Tod oder Freiheit* (Death or Freedom).

He spoke of a sense of freedom when watching the film *Jaws* or the evening news bulletin, looking at Marlboro advertisements and reading comics. His attitude towards freedom, he said, was complex and full of contradictions. Which was why his film was so full of contradictions (as film reviewers have not been slow to point out).

Wolf Gremm's film is based on Schiller's play *Die Räuber* (The Robbers). Gremm has reduced the sentimental, stormy original to the bare bones, the framework for his film. However, the influence of the original is always present; it dominates, and flaws *Tod oder Freiheit*.

The technique is legitimate in itself, but Gremm the screenplay writer would have been doing Gremm the director a favour if he had written his own his story instead of simply taking the verse out of a classical drama, inserting now action in places and filling the gaps with dull and unrivetting dialogue.

Schiller's original is virtually nothing without the verse, which holds the whole structure together.

Gremm attaches considerable importance to professionalism and has used a horsemaster and an extra cutter for action sequences in this film. If he can afford such luxuries, he ought to get a dialogue writer to overhaul his screenplay.

His adaptation falls between two stools. It is neither free enough, nor faithful enough to the original. Gremm cannot hold the necessary balance between the banal and the extravagant. Jost Volcano's camerawork is technically masterly, but this does not compensate for the inadequacies and generally poor performances of most of the actors.

Only Mario Adorf and Peter Sattmann are at all convincing in this film, and we can see them in far better form almost every day at the Stuttgart theatre. Gert Fröbe's performance frequently oversteps the limits of acting respectability.

Gremm's aim, in his own words, was to make a great German film out of a great German story. His success is only partial.

Gremm is an aficionado of gangster films and Italian westerns, regional period pieces and costume dramas. He takes a childlike delight in cinematic artistry. The swordfights and torture scenes are the best I have seen for many years, the huge boulders tumble down the slopes in classic style.

His playful use of the medium's techniques is admirable; his mastery of the more essential dramatic virtues of time and space and timing considerably less so.

At one moment the film is galloping away, completely out of control, at the next it has slowed to a slow, lazy trot. The story suffers from some incomprehensible cuts. There are far too many tears and demonstrative emotions, but they follow from the overall pacing of the film.

Gremm's film tells us less about death and freedom than about the yearnings and failures of the German cinema. The loss of our best directors during the Third Reich, the inadequate reconstruction of film schools after the war and the lack of technically qualified teachers mean that there is a gap in the German film-producing scene that has never been satisfactorily filled.

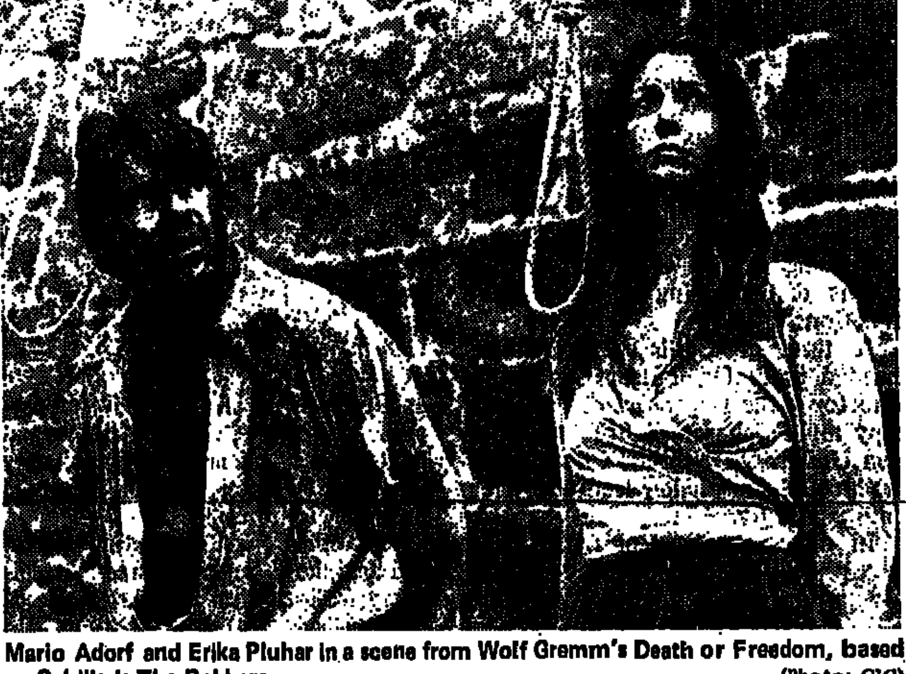
Gremm's film is trying to take the place of an entire genre. It underlines how far we still have to go before we can make good action films. We simply lack the money and the know-how.

Regina Ziegler, the brave producer of *Tod und Freiheit*, had to scrape together a budget so paltry that it would have produced howls of derision from Italian or American producers.

Still, it was an attempt to do something new. Wolf Gremm may one day achieve his ambition of producing good action cinema in this country. He ought to consider cooperating more with other directors and film-makers in this country.

Thomas Petz

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 15 February 1978)



Mario Adorf and Erika Pluhar in a scene from Wolf Gremm's Death or Freedom, based on Schiller's The Robbers. (Photo: CIC)

Soft and subtle Gluck is star opera attraction

Christoph Wilibald Gluck's opera *Orpheus and Eurydice*, directed and choreographed by John Neumeier, conducted by Eugen Jochum with stage sets by Marco Arturo is one of the star attractions on the Hamburg State Opera's programme at the moment.

I must begin by singling out Eugen Jochum, conducts the Philharmonic State Orchestra in masterly style. His interpretation of Gluck is soft and sutle. He makes maximum use of echo effects, uses the mobility of the piano pieces to the full to bring out the richness of the melody and do full justice to Gluck's intentions.

He makes it quite clear that Gluck's work is fundamentally baroque in style — though inspired and not at all schematic.

Neumeier, too, concentrates on the historical aspect of the opera. His Orpheus and Eurydice is split into three parts. The first describes an everyday event: a man is mourning for his dead wife.

We see Orpheus on an almost bare stage, with only a park bank and an open grave. Men and women in black follow the coffin. Orpheus, in mourning, looks as we would expect a modern singer to look: suit, white, open-necked shirt, and long hair. Orpheus stabs himself to death on the park bench, is found by passers-by and carried out.

The second part complements the first, giving contour to Orpheus's hallucinatory experiences as, ravaged by sorrow, he wanders through the underworld and tries to bring Eurydice back. This sequence contains a number of striking images: Orpheus walking slowly down long flights of steps into the catacombs; harsh focussing suddenly on the faces of the dead, revealing their hopeless longing for life; the way they cling to Orpheus, like lemures.

Orpheus wanders through night to come to the light. Eurydice is wandering among the blessed in a place of meditation bathed in soft light and flooded with gentle music. The blessed walk in slow dignity. We know how the story ends. Orpheus disobeys the command and looks at his beloved, at which she dies once and for all.

Or at least this is how the story should end. Not so in Gluck's version, where Amor takes pity on the unfortunate lovers. This is the third part of the opera, the world of the baroque theatre, taking place in a miniature theatre on the large stage. We see a distant fairy tale in a strange, artificial world, full of gods, amorettes, muses and shepherds.

The dancing is excellent. Francois Klaus is a poetic Orpheus, Colleen Scott a loving Eurydice, Kevin Haigen a lively, self-confident Amor. The dancing is historic, the style strictly baroque.

This device underlines the difference between 1762, the year in which Orpheus and Eurydice was first performed, and 1978, the year of Neumeier's version. Neumeier's idea is quite simply brilliant. His images call our sense of history in question.

Two or three years ago, John Neumeier directed an unforgettable *Don Juan* to Gluck's music. This version of Gluck is not quite so controversial but is equally brilliant. This work is an utterly convincing synthesis of ballet and opera and as such a very rare thing.

Wolfgang Schöne, who sings the part of Orpheus, is the ideal man for the part. His interpretation is existential — moving and moved but never sentimental. His voice is deep, his performance rivetting. Judith Beckmann, who sings Eurydice, partners him well with her fine soprano voice and gestures. Gabriele Fuchs sings the part of Amor.

Rolf Gaska

(Kieler Nachrichten, 14 February 1978)

O'Neill's world of whiskey and remorse

Not one of the characters in Eugene O'Neill's later plays seems to be able to get by without a bottle of whiskey — Irish whiskey, of course, for they are Irish Americans.

Indeed they seem to spend most of their lives drinking and bemoaning the ways of the world. That is how rich property owner James Tyrone spends most of his time in O'Neill's four-act play *Ein Mond für die Beladenen*. Former British Army major Cornelius Melody in *Fast ein Poet* is no different.

The two plays have been performed in this country recently and one cannot help noticing the strong similarity between them.

Ein Mond für die Beladenen is now on at Ida Ehre's Hamburger Kammerspielen. It is impressively directed by Rick Mueller and Renate Heilmeyer plays the part of Josie, the resolute farmer's daughter. Jöns Andersson is directing another production of the same play in Lübeck. *Fast ein Poet* had its German premiere in Lübeck recently.

It soon becomes clear why these characters are always trying to drown their troubles. The fact that O'Neill describes Melody as "almost a poet" gives us a clue.

Melody is a dreamer who leaves England behind him and goes to live in the US of the pioneering days. Life here is tough, too tough for him and he tries to escape the harsh realities by mixing in a small world of intellectuals. Whiskey facilitates this escape.

James Tyrone also fails to come to terms with reality. He seeks refuge in permanent intoxication or guiltily returns to the arms of Josie, begging forgiveness.

There are loud and comical scenes when the arrogance of the poet manqué is punctured. The mood is elegaic and symphonic as Tamie seeks love and affection from a lover appalled at his drunkenness.

Neither play is easy to act. Great subtlety is called for to prevent some scenes getting dangerously close to a kind of psychoanalytical seance or wallowing in mere verbosity.

The Lübeck production of *Ein Mond für die Beladenen* does not quite succeed in avoiding these extremes.

Director Andersson has gone to great pains to get the milieu right, but Dagmar Laurens as Josie, robust compared

Continued on page 12

■ MEDICINE

Bio-feedback device helps patients help themselves

The bio-feedback principle is now being applied in psychiatry as a means of controlling vegetative bodily functions.

A team of Göttingen psychiatrists, headed by Professor Hans Carl Leuner, director of the Deparment of Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics of the Göttingen University Psychiatric Clinic, has introduced the respiratory feedback system into psychiatry.

In order to prevent or reduce faulty



bodily functions of a vegetative or psychosomatic nature, the team enables patients to see and hear their respiratory functions by means of an electronic measuring instrument.

The desired effect of reducing tension and anxieties is better achieved by respiratory feedback than by other bio-feedback methods.

The patient is fitted with a belt around the lower chest area which registers even the smallest respiratory action by transforming it into electrical impulses, says Professor Leuner. A control mechanism with an amplifier and a sound generator converts breathing into visual and acoustic signals.

Whenever the patient breathes in, a lamp lights up and dims again as he exhales. The patient is instructed to lie down and concentrate on the rhythmic lighting up and dimming of the lamp while at the same time paying attention to the acoustic signal monitoring his respiratory rhythm.

The objective is to make the patient find his own rhythm which eventually leads to relaxation and a breathing rhythm similar to that during sleep.

In the course of research over several years the Göttingen team used this method to treat more than 400 patients with neuro-vegetative, psychosomatic and various neurosis symptoms. After three to five 30-minute exercises close to 80 per cent of the patients felt relaxed and free of anxieties.

Asked about the effects of the therapy, the patients said they felt calm and much less jittery. Others who had categorised themselves as timid, said the treatment had made them more self-assured.

Some even said the treatment made them happy and alert as opposed to their former melancholy and tiredness.

Statistical evaluation of this therapy shows that it calms, increases alertness and acts as an anti-depressant. Phobias are breathed away, so to speak.

Professor Leuner considers fifteen 30 minute sessions (three sessions a week) most effective. This should be followed by one exercise a week to secure a more lasting effect. In some patients the beneficial results extended over a period of several months or a full year. The electronic instrument through which the respiratory functions are seen and heard is manufactured by a Göttingen company. Some of them have already been installed in clinics and are being used in private practice. The general trend is to provide patients who respond well with an instrument they can use at home. But before this can become wide-spread the cost of the instrument will have to be reduced.

Margot Said-Lang
(Der Tagesspiegel, 18 February 1978)

Day hospital is ideal for aged

Un unusual geriatric day hospital which can treat up to 60 patients with a therapeutic method experts consider ideal for certain ailments and which costs much less than ordinary treatment has opened in Frankfurt.

Patients report in the morning and return home in the evening. The national health system estimates that the new method saves about 45 per cent of normal costs.

The idea is based on the realisation that more and more elderly people suffer from ailments which require intensive care for several hours during the day but do not call for round-the-clock treatment. It is a waste of time and money to keep them in a hospital overnight... and night care is a particularly costly item in a hospital's budget.

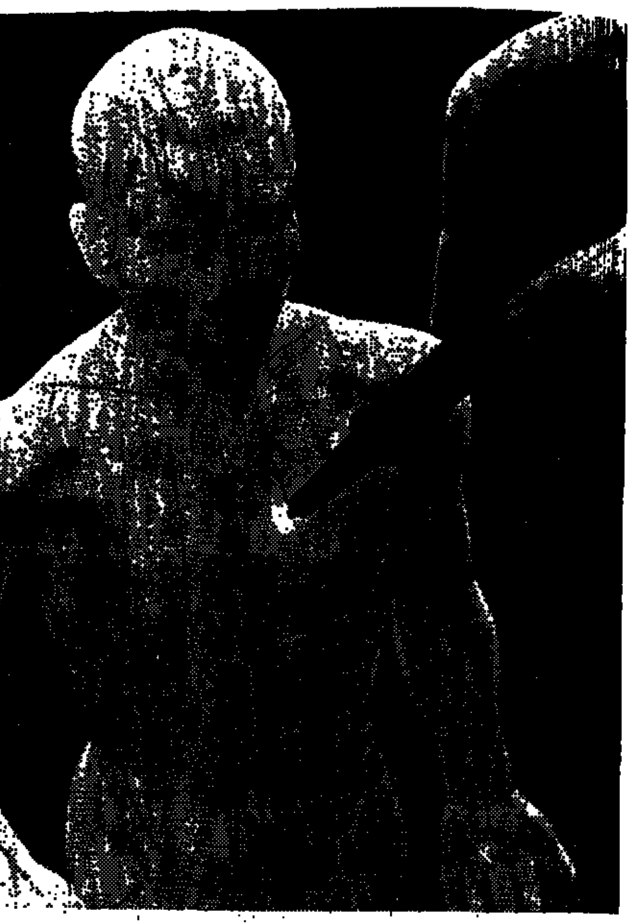
The Frankfurt Geriatric Clinic treats only patients who are not bedridden, and its objective is to let them return home as quickly as possible.

The clinical treatment is coupled with rehabilitation therapy aimed at making use of available reserves of strength, thus postponing the time when the patient can no longer look after himself.

This includes occupational therapy, gymnastics, geriatric sports and miniature golf.

Those who find it difficult to walk receive specialised training on a number of different surfaces including cobblestones. Lunch is served in a cafeteria, and there are bunks for siestas.

Hans Hellmuth Kannenberg
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 18 February 1978)



Painless needle: laser beam acupuncture. (Photo: Siem



Munich firm produces laser beam acupuncture needle

Acupuncture one of the oldest forms of therapy, has joined forces with modern technology. The silver needle can now be replaced by a laser beam.

Following extensive tests the laser beam has proved its effectiveness in the treatment of pain. The instrument that goes under the name of *Akupulas* has been developed jointly by *Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm* in Ottobrun and *Siemens* in Munich.

The laser beam is painless and sterile, penetrating the skin to between 3 and 10 millimetres. This means the beam can be applied to highly sensitive zones such as tonsils.

Laser beams are now finding a wide range of applications in medicine. The Soviety for Ray and Environment Research in Neuherberg near Munich (GSF) reports the successful use of laser scalpels in laboratories and operating theatres. Successes have also been reported in the treatment of burns and haemorrhaging stomach ulcers.

Good results have also been achieved in the treatment of bladder tumours. Tumours up to the size of a hazelnut have been successfully treated at the Urological University Clinic in Munich.

Claus Höhne
(Münchner Merkur, 14 February 1978)

O'Neill's world

Continued from page 12

to the frail Renate Heilmeyer of the Hamburg production, does not convince. And because she does not convince Jürgen Haug's confessions and self-lacerations loose their effect.

Peter Preissler, who has directed O'Neill in Hanover in the past, directs the Osnabrück production with the emphasis on characterisation.

The loving mother Nora is movingly played by Sigrid Zander. Despite everything, she is proud of her braggard of a husband. The daughter, Sara, is torn between love and hate of her father and also fears the loss of her lover (who does not appear on stage).

The major himself is a forceful, imposing personality, played by Osnabrück theatre director Jürgen Brock.

Milieu does not play such an important part in this production. What at first seems merely a personal tragi-comedy grows in stature and becomes of universal significance. It begins as rollicking, loud-mouthed comedy and turns into remorseless, tragic disillusionment. Preissler does not, on the other hand, advocate a return to sober reality and rejection of all utopian dreams. He leaves the question open.

The audience seemed to be impressed and I heard a number of them eagerly discussing the play on the way home. This is a powerful testimony to the relevance of this play and this production.

Horst Ziermann
(Die Welt, 17 February 1978)

New centre to teach young how to keep healthy

The health of the young is deteriorating. Twenty-five per cent of youngsters suffer from circulatory disorders, 30 per cent have bad posture and one out of four is overweight.

Today's youth is much more susceptible to colds, exhaustion and nervous disorders than previous generations. In other words, many young people are ripe for a spa.

The German Health Insurance for White-collar Workers has now opened a model institution — a youth spa costing 30 million deutschmarks.

The speed at which the health of the young is deteriorating is borne out by statistics. Of 110,000 young people in Bavaria who had compulsory checkups at the beginning of their working lives, 22 per cent were found to be subject to health hazards in their chosen occupation. Only four years earlier this figure amounted to 14 per cent.

At the new spa in Pfronten, Allgäu, 19 spa therapists, one sports teacher and one social worker look after the 14-to 19-year olds admitted on the recommendation of their doctors.

During the 29-day stay the young people are divided into groups with custom-made therapy for each. The objective is to eliminate risk and motivate the young people towards a more health-oriented way of life. The boys and girls are provided with therapeutic baths and large gymnasiums.

The therapy staff is assisted by 25 nurses, four masseurs and a dietician, and the health resort is open to the children of all insured parents.

Retraining eating habits is assisted by a special kitchen in which the youngsters are permitted to prepare their own meals.

Alcoholic beverages are banned but smoking in the children's private rooms is permitted. The curriculum includes two hours of health training a week in which the dangers of smoking are stressed. A two-to three-hour nap, indoors or outdoors, is mandatory.

For recreation there are three television rooms, a discotheque, do-it-yourself workshops, bowling alleys, ping-pong, billiards and a music room with instruments.

Karl Stankiewitz
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 11 February 1978)

■ BOOKS

Exploring the life and social times of the selfish animal gene

It has long been believed that the social behaviour of animals is determined by the need to preserve the species. Biologists have up to now assumed that higher forms of animal life have a natural inhibition against killing one of their own species.

Recent observation of animal behaviour and experiments contradict this theory. Scientists observing the behaviour of the white-nosed Guenon monkey in Uganda recorded the following scene: a male, having defeated his rival, took over its harem and proceeded to copulate with several rutting females. As soon as he noticed a mother with its baby, it attacked her. After four days, the mother was too weak to resist. The male killed and ate the baby.

Four weeks later another baby was born in the pack. The male again pounced on it and killed it. Three months later, two young were born and the male this time looked after them peacefully and lovingly.

Scientists have made similar observations with other species of monkey—pavians, Indian Hulmans and African Mountain Guerezas. As soon as a male monkey has taken over a harem, it kills all the young. Then it copulates with the female monkeys. When his own young are born, he is far from unfriendly towards them. He will even defend them heroically against all enemies.

Lion also lives in harem families, and

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

the same kind of behaviour has been observed in them. Behavioural scientists have been puzzled by this and have tended to dismiss the killing of young as an accident, a pathological abnormality.

According to their theory, it had to be an abnormality, otherwise the theory would lose validity.

The number of reports of this "highly deviant" behaviour increased over the years. Now there is no longer any doubt that animals frequently kill members of their own species. It has become clear that there is no such thing as a natural taboo among animals against killing their own species. The theory of the preservation of the species begins to look shaky.

How can this kind of animal behaviour be explained without having recourse to the "accident of nature" theory? It is clear that it has nothing to do with the preservation of the species. Indeed, is there any meaning or sense in this behaviour at all?

Wolfgang Wickler, director of the Max Planck Institute for Behavioural Physiology in Seewiesen, and his assistant Uta Seibt have written a book examining this question and providing — amazing though this may seem — a biological explanation.

They owe their insights "not to improved experimental techniques or methods of statistical analysis but to a revision of our thinking." The two authors have abandoned the theory of the preservation of the species and worked on the assumption that economic factors, and particularly the genes, are the main explanation for this behaviour.

Individual animals preserve their own genes and continue their line. They do not primarily preserve the species. The killing of the young is an extreme illustration.

A lion usually rules a pack for two or three years before it is driven away by its succesor. Lionesses often spend up to 30 months looking after their young and in this period they cannot mate. They only begin to rut after this time.

The lion cannot wait that long. It kills the young and copulates with the lioness, ensuring that its genes are preserved. Gestation among white-nosed Guenon monkeys last about four to months. The young born later in the case quoted above could be its own — no wonder it takes such loving care of them.

According to this theory, animal behaviour is determined by the selfishness of the gene. The title Wickler and Seibt have given to their book is *The Principle of Selfishness – Causes and Consequences of Social Behaviour* (Hoffmann and Campe Verlag, Hamburg, 372 pages, DM 36).

Wickler and Seibt quote from August Weismann's Keimbahn: "Cells can only come from cells. Genes are, as a rule, copied exactly. The body or soma cells needed to build up the organism with its various organs come from the bud cells.. the function of the organism is to multiply its genes and pass them on to another organism."

Wickler and Seibt's book is a synthesis of this theory and the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest.

The authors come to the following conclusion: "The genes have built the organism in their own interest. In so far as the organism is necessary for the preservation and reproduction of the genes, they guide its behaviour in such a way as to ensure their own reproduction."

Brothers and sisters have the same genes, so that mutual help between parents and children, and among relatives, has its advantages. Wickler and Seibt use their theory to explain the behaviour of bees.

The female offspring of the queen bee do not have offspring of their own but concentrate instead of looking after the queen bee's offspring. Up to now the question has been asked: what is the purpose of sterility, if, as Darwin maintains, what counts is to reproduce oneself as plentifully as posaible and ensure one's survival?

In the case of the bees, we have to remember how closely related they are. Sisters are more closely related that mother and daughter (they have more common genes.)

Brothers and sisters are even less closely related than mother and daughter.

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■ SOCIETY

Therapy seminars to help divorcees cope with life

The Federal Republic of Germany's first divorce seminar has been established in Essen by psychotherapists Norbert Szepanski, 29, and Achim Sturmberg, 28.

Says Norbert Szepanski: "Some 100,000 couples get divorced every year. Many of them are unable to cope with the psychological consequences without outside help. Depression and even suicide attempts are the order of the day.

"I know what I'm talking about because I'm divorced myself. No matter how bad a marriage, you cannot strip yourself of it as if you were changing coats."

The eight men and women divorcees meet once a week in the consulting rooms of the Essen psychotherapists. The cost for ten sessions is DM150.

"Such seminars have been common in the United States for some time; but the charges there are very much higher," says Herr Szepanski. "We find that the financial burdens following a divorce are such that most people could not participate if we charged them more."

The second seminar is to begin shortly, and there is a waiting list for the next one. It is obvious that the two Essen psychotherapists have filled a genuine need.

The participants are usually very inhibited at the start. But Norbert Szepanski solves this by telling them about his own experience after his divorce.

Suddenly they start talking, and they are clearly glad of the opportunity to talk about their problems. This is particularly so for men because, as Herr Szepanski puts it, "It is considered natural for a woman to show her emotions. But men are expected to be strong and silent, and they act the part ... usually explaining how glad they are to have rid themselves of the shackles. But behind that facade lurks a very different reality."

To start with, there are the financial problems of a divorce.

"Once a marriage has foundered and the two people involved have no other way of hurting each other, they at least want to inflict as much material damage as they can."

The outcome is that the loser frequently finds that he has not enough money left to live on.

In one case a 40-year old man had to move in with his mother because he could no longer afford an apartment of his own.

The change in the way of life also causes problems. Housewives frequently find it hard to go back to work and men are helpless once faced with the necessity of looking after their food and clothing.

To make matters worse, friends and acquaintance frequently distance themselves from divorcees because they grow tired of lamentations about the viciousness of the ex-spouse.

After married life, loneliness usually becomes insufferable. In many instances the divorcee feels like half a person.

And notwithstanding the rule of thumb that the worse a marriage the easier to seek a divorce, women who have been abused by their husbands do not always rejoice at their new freedom. Psychotherapists frequently find that post-divorce problems are even worse following such marriages.

"One of the most common problems we have to deal with is the feeling of guilt. Some cannot stop blaming themselves, while others blame everything on the ex-spouse," says Norbert Szepanski.

Many divorcees seek refuge in alcohol, while others look for new partners. In cases where a new partnership is started before the aftermath of the old one has been overcome the same problems arise that led to the dissolution of the marriage in the first place.

The objective of the two Essen psychotherapists is to enable divorcees to talk it out and thus come to grips with their position. The therapy aims at enabling the patients to cope with divorce while time preparing them for a possible new partnership.

The seminar is also available to unmarried couples who have broken up.

Horst Zimmermann

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 14 February 1978)



Sweet warning

Seven-year-old Sven Herdemerten of Essen painted a graphic picture of the dangers of tooth decay in his prize-winning entry in a poster competition organised by the Ministry of Health.

(Photo: dpa)

Selfish genes

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If we assume that an individual will always choose its closest relatives for social help because this is the best means of ensuring the survival of its own genes, then it is only logical that female drones should look after their sisters. And this is precisely what happens.

Wickler and Seibt's work is not mere theorising. They back their theories up with hard fact and calculations, working out the precise degrees of relationship in a pack of lions or among bees. The behaviour they predict on the basis of thier calculations always coincides with what is observed in the animals' natural habitat.

How do we explain the "altruism" in nature? The way a mother sacrifices herself for her young. Here, too, the gene rules. By rescuing her young, the mother at the same time ensures the survival of her genes.

Wickler and Seibt have observed that economic principles are the behavioural motor in animal life — not just in heroic cases such as that of the mother but in everyday life. A predator weighs up the risks and the possible gain, the relationship of effort to reward, when it kills a wild deer.

As Wickler puts it: "Actions are determined by the overall advantage they will bring for the genes. The overall advantage consists of the individual advantage for the agent plus all the advantages that will accrue to its relatives, depending on the closeness of relationship. We have, up to now, underestimated animals' ability to weigh up advantages and disadvantages and to recognise varying degrees of relationship."

Christoph Pech

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 18 February 1978)



Feet first

Big white bare feet signal the start of a pedestrians-only zone in the city of Kassel

(Photo: Werner Lengemann)

Court rules on sex education

It all started when a man saw a picture of a stallion servicing a mare in his ten-year old daughter's biology textbook.

Then he saw a description in the book of human sexual intercourse.

The father, a civil servant, took the matter to court, demanding that his daughter be exempted from sex education.

The case has now been rejected by the Karlsruhe Constitutional Court. The nation's highest court has held that sex education falls primarily in the province of parental care. But the state has an obligation to provide education and is thus entitled to include sex education in the curriculum of its schools.

Sexuality, the ruling points out, has many social ramifications.

The Constitutional Court stressed, however, that sex education at school must be unbiased and must not interfere with parental authority and parents' religious views.

The school must desist from any attempt to influence young people by favouring any particular sexual attitude. Where these limitations are overstepped, it is up to the education authorities to intervene.

Provided the limits outlined by the court are observed, sex education at schools does not require parental consent. But the Constitutional Court grants parents the right to be told in good time about the kind of sex education their child is to receive.

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 15 February 1978)

Mayor's scheme to reward new parents

Franz Vit, mayor of Aldenhoven (pop. 13,000), decided to act against diminishing birth rates due to the Pill when the rate dropped to a mere 120 babies a year.

With the approval of the SPD majority in the city council, he set aside DM25,000 as an incentive for citizens to propagate and thus restore Aldenhoven's reputation as the Federal Republic of Germany's most fertile city.

Franz Vit will present the parents of every new Aldenhovener with a cheque for DM150 and a bunch of flowers.

The mayor will make the presentation in the maternity ward or in the couple's home, regardless whether the parents are rich or poor.

The move has been opposed by the non-partisan head of the city administration, Hermann Goertz, 57, who holds that no-one could seriously believe that DM150 would induce citizens to throw away their Polls.

The Opposition CDU on the council also voted against the project. They say the mayor simply wants to drum up votes.

Herr Goertz, however, says he would be prepared to vote in favour of a compromise solution.

"I consider it wrong, to give every family DM150, even for a first child. But families with two children should get DM500 for the third one."

He maintains that it would be better to give the money to people for whom the birth of a child is a financial burden than to those citizens who need no assistance.

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 17 February 1978)

Survey reveals abortion secrecy

Thirty-three per cent of women do not tell their husbands that they have had an abortion.

This has emerged from a study by Dr Klaus Peter Runte, 37, a gynaecologist who has performed many abortions.

"Since the amendement of the Abortion Law in June 1976 the number of abortions has increased ten-fold," says Dr Runte.

The national figure for 1977 was 50,000, and in Dr Runte's clinic are some 750 women.

A questionnaire revealed that:

- One in four women decides entirely on her own to have an abortion;
- Every second woman consults her mother, girlsfriend or sister, but not the father of the child;
- 33 per cent of the fathers never learn about the abortion. In fact, they know nothing about the pregnancy either.

The motivations women give are:

- "I could never have accepted the father of the child as my husband" (most frequent);
- "The father of the child is much too old;"
- "It was marital rape."

In 44 per cent of the cases the women said they aborted to avoid financial problems.

"In reality most women lived in good or adequate economic circumstances," says Dr Runte.

(Welt am Sonntag, 19 February 1978)

■ SPORT

Death in the ring: is professional boxing paid sport or legal homicide?

Twenty-year-old West Berlin welterweight boxer Jörg Eipel's life hung by a thread after his European championship bout against Alain Marion of France on 17 December in Creil, near Paris. Eipel lay in a coma for five weeks and his doctors are still not prepared to forecast whether he will ever regain normal health. As always when accidents of this kind happen in the ring, the ethics of professional boxing are aired and a complete ban or other legal provisions considered. This article is written by Kaiserslautern SPD Bundestag deputy Adolf Müller-Emmert, a well-known advocate of stricter safeguards in the ring.

More than 300 boxers have died in the ring since the war and thousands have had their health seriously damaged. Most have been professional boxers.

So we ought not to take notice only when the practice of ruthless managers and promoters riding roughshod over human life and health in the interests of purses and pugilistic show business hits the headlines.

In 1968 Jupp Elze of Cologne died in the ring and was afterwards found to have been drugged. In 1972 Willm Kramer, a student, went like a lamb to the slaughter. And last December Jörg Eipel of West Berlin, the European welterweight champion, was floored for weeks by his French challenger.

Twenty-year-old Jörg Eipel has been in a coma for weeks and may never recover consciousness, let alone his health. He will probably be a cripple for life.

Is it not time the authorities did something about this tragic toll?

Britain rediscovered the "noble art" in the 17th century and the British were long considered exemplary in the ring. But boxing has long since taken a turn for the worse.

The art of self-defence has increasingly been underrated by the ringside judges. Nowadays the force of a blow counts for more than dexterously avoiding a hook or an uppercut.

This trend has not been without effect on amateur boxing; yet according to a ruling by the Federal Labour Court in Kassel the amateur code is not a particularly dangerous leisure activity provided it is run on a club basis and under supervision by a trainer.

The culprits are among the professionals, with hard-nosed businessmen showing utter desregard and contempt for the statutes of professional boxing and scientific surveys.

Regulations are only paper, managers and trainers seem to have agreed in Jörg Eipel's case after a bout against a Danish boxer by the name of Hansen in August last year.

In April 1977 the Federal Sport Institute published a report by a commission of inquiry recommending improved safety provisions for boxers.

But the men who run the professional code were evidently not interested. Indeed, they do not seem to have bothered reading the report at all.

Press reports from Berlin indicate a disgraceful state of affairs. After the bout between Eipel and Hansen, the doctor who treated Jörg Eipel had this to say on 27 August:

"I have been treating him ever since the fight on 6 August, as a result of which he was suffering from concussion and a three-centimetre cut above his right eye.

"He stayed in bed for ten days and is still badly in need of rest. I have seen him today and advised him to neither box or train in the ring with a sparring partner for about six weeks."

Yet on 7 September, 11 days later, Berlin newspapers announced that Eipel was back in training. There was no mention of either his trainer or his manager having told him to take his doctor's advice.

In view of the dubious attitude adopted by a majority of promoters, and the dispute over cash and reputation between the various professional organisations, it is probably up to local authorities to exercise greater caution before allowing professional boxing contests.

It is not much use one of the professional organisations cooperating with the Federal Sport Institute on a long-term probe of boxing and health.

There is little substance in their protestations that "doctors, trainers, seconds and officials are well aware of their heavy responsibility for the health of the men in their charge and determined to do this responsibility justice."

The assurance that the Professional Boxing Association (BDB) will take drastic action against breaches of this principle is splendid, but so far it exists only on paper.

Heartened by the "compromise recommendations" embodied in the boxing report but upset by the publicity from the Eipel case, BDB officials have been quick to announce that from now on professional boxers will wear eight-ounce gloves. Six-ounce gloves are out.

Further safeguards have been proposed to the European Boxing Union and are due for approval this May. European championship bouts are only to be contested by boxers 21 and over. Referees and doctors are to be strictly neutral.

Why, you may wonder, has it taken so long for such elementary proposals as these to be espoused? Professional boxing presents a sorry picture. It seems no less shady than the business practices of the men who run it.

Pundits are talking in terms of 1977 having been a "black year." Crowd-pulling bouts are few and far between. Forty-nine German boxers fought for a living last year; most of them found it hard to make ends meet.

A further 22 foreign nationals fight as professional boxers registered in this country. Between them they fought in 188 bouts last year, plus 32 bouts abroad.

Only five of the bouts abroad resulted in a win for the visitor. One bout was declared a tie. "Only fall guys are sent abroad," one official blandly comments.

Middleweight Klaus Hein of West Berlin holds a sad record for 1977. He fought six professional bouts last year and lost every one.

According to recent publications roughly 1,700 former fighters in Britain are now constant visitors to the doctor's surgery.

The public who pay to watch fights seldom realise that the scars prize fighters sustain stay with them until the end of their days.

Stars such as Max Schmeling or Gustav ("Bubi") Scholz may have gone on to become successful businessmen in their own right, but these two, with their health unimpaired, are exceptions.

Professors Jokl, Unterharnscheidt and Sellier may have given rise to an international dispute between medical specialists and boxing officials by claiming that "boxing is the only sporting discipline in which one contestant deliberately sets out to do the other serious physical damage" or that "the knockout is the only legally permissible form of homicide."

But legal provisions alone are evidently not enough to deal with the problem in this country, except, this is, for a complete ban on professional boxing.

Legally a ban is feasible in Germany. But one would not like to anticipate the outcome of a constitutional appeal.

An appeal would refer mainly to Article 12 of Basic Law, which proclaims the right to a free choice and unhampered pursuit of career.

The only possibility of avoiding a prolonged constitutional dispute would be, although the likelihood is slight, if a European convention were to ban professional boxing all over West and Southern Europe.

In keeping with a recommendation by the Nordic Council, or standing conference of Scandinavian heads of government, in 1963 and 1968 Sweden imposed a ban on professional boxing from 1970.

In Sweden, then, professional boxing is a statutory offence. In Denmark, Norway and Finland professional pugilism is fairly insignificant, but not yet banned.

In Iceland, however, both amateur and professional boxing are banned — as they are in People's China. In Iceland the ban has been in force since 1956, in China since Chairman Mao's cultural revolution.

In the Eastern Bloc, including Cuba, there is no such thing as the professional code, whereas elsewhere in Asia and in Africa prize-fighting continues to be extremely popular.

Sports officials in the GDR, for instance, claim to rate professional boxing a "typically capitalist form of degeneration and exploitation."

Yet the supremacy of amateurs from the GDR, Poland and the Soviet Union is largely due to the fact that although they may be amateurs in name they put in strictly professional training.

They benefit from intensive and costly medical care, as Professor Bernhard Schwarz, head of neurology and psychiatry at Leipzig University Hospital, claims in a report on the long-term effect of boxing on health.

This care and attention, he reckoned, is one of the reasons why allegedly only four out of 200 former boxers were found to have undergone "serious personality changes."

Adolf-Müller-Emmert

(Welt der Arbeit, 16 February 1978)